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## *The Mischief of Monica.*

BY L. B. WALFORD.

### CHAPTER XIX.

#### A FRIEND IN NEED.

Oh, chance too frail, too frantic sweet,  
To-morrow sees me at her feet!—C. PATMORE.

WE have said that Ethel Carnforth, neglected by her father's guest at her father's dinner-table, began to observe Mr. Dorrien.

Harry gave her plenty to observe. All through the evening which followed, he wore the same absorbed, exalted, and yet chastened mien, the effect of Monica's spirit on his own. She played upon him at will; her stronger nature acted upon his, involuntarily; while even voluntarily—alas! voluntarily—no magnetism was withheld. We cannot defend her; he was less to blame than she.

'How those two did go it last night!' observed Lionel Carnforth, the following morning. 'By Jove! Miss Lavenham knows a thing or two. I had no idea she and her sister would have been such acquisitions. I wonder if there is anything up, or if it is all moonshine, between the eldest one and Harry Dorrien. And, by Jove! there is a talk about him and one of the Schofield girls too; the one with the money. How would Miss Daisy Schofield like to have seen Harry last night, I wonder!'

At the same time a somewhat similar query was being put in another quarter.

'Went the pace rather last night, Dorrien, my boy,' quoth Captain Alverstoke, who was Dorrien's guest for the occasion, ere he departed from Cullingdon, after the next day's breakfast; he had previously abstained from making any remark on the point, for reasons of his own. 'Anything serious, eh?'

A short answer, the purport of which was missed.

'All up with the little Schofield girl, then, I suppose,' proceeded Alverstoke, leisurely. 'Ya-as? You'll do better with a Lavenham, Harry. Good family, the Lavenhams,' slowly producing his cigar-case and match-box.

'Look here,' said Dorrien, suddenly. 'Archie, you are a good fellow. I—I know you are a good fellow. Send round the dog-cart again. I want to talk to you.' He looked away as he spoke, and a sort of convulsion passed over his face.

'All right.' Captain Alverstoke lit his cigar, gave the order, and turned to his companion. 'Where shall we go? Outside or in?'

'Anywhere,' said Dorrien, hurriedly. 'Out, perhaps; then we sha'n't be interrupted. Come along here,' and he walked rapidly from the house.

'What is coming now?' quoth Alverstoke to himself.

They had reached the end of the shrubbery and entered the wood beyond, before his companion's pace slackened. It was obvious that the interview was to be a long one, and, moreover, of an unreserved nature, intolerant of publicity. At length it began.

'Do you know,' said Dorrien, with a motion as if impelled against his will to speak—'do you know what it is to have two distinct devils pulling you in two distinctly different directions at one and the same time? Did you ever hear of a man having that?'

'Well, no,' said Alverstoke, his soft, slowly drawling accents dripping out, as it were, one word after another—'no, I should say not. When I was a boy we used to be told nice little stories about the good and the bad angel, and that sort of thing, eh? Ya-as? Always rather liked the bad angel; couldn't help it, you know; deuced good fellow. Well?'

'There is no "good angel" in my case,' said Dorrien. 'We don't deal in such articles hereabouts. But we have bad ones by the score—and they don't hit it off among themselves. If they could agree about me, for instance,——' and he paused.

‘Agree about you?’

‘If they would let me do one thing or the other I might get along; but it puts a fellow in an awkward position,’ forcing a laugh, ‘to be made sport of by two quarrelsome fiends.’

‘Quarrelling over you, are they?’

‘Each wants me to do as beastly a thing as can be done. Alverstoke,’—in another tone,—‘you know what I mean. Speak out now, and tell me what you think.’

‘Is it about your marrying, Harry?’

‘Of course.’

‘It is not then settled with the young lady you told me about?’ prudently omitting the name.

‘It is settled as nearly as it can be. I have gone as far as I can go, without asking her to be my wife in set terms; and now,——’ and he turned away his head, while something that was almost a groan escaped his lips.

‘And now,’ said Alverstoke—‘now, you have, I suppose—for remember I can still only suppose—seen some reason for changing your mind. You have met with some one——’

‘—*Some one?*’ almost shouted Dorrien. ‘Yes, some one. You know well enough who. You saw for yourself. Good heavens! do not pretend ignorance,’ passionately. ‘Anyone who was there last night—who saw us together,——’

‘Yes; I thought so.’ The quiet words seemed to sting the other to the quick.

‘You “thought so,” my good fellow? Don’t suppose it was any credit to you to think so? I did not care who “thought so,” with ever increasing vehemence. ‘I tell you—but what is the use?’ and his voice sank again. ‘I—I never was so——’

‘—So what?’

‘Happy or miserable—I don’t know which. Both together. Before I went to the Carnforths’ yesterday I looked upon myself as an engaged man, and I meant to behave accordingly. At least I think I did. Anyhow I meant to try. Now, I—can’t. It is of no use. When I am with her, near her, I tell you what it is, I perfectly loathe the idea of the other. It is brutal to say it, but it is the truth. The thought of going there to-day as I had meant to do, sends a shudder right through me. I can’t rid myself of it. I——,’

‘Then, for Heaven’s sake, don’t make a fool of yourself, my boy.’

‘Make a fool of myself?’ Dorrien stared vacantly.

'Strikes me you are piling up the agony a bit, ain't you?' proceeded his friend. 'You have not behaved over well, I admit, but, if it comes to that, there are not very many among us who can cast the correct stone. All you have to do is to back out as quickly as you can: and don't imagine for a moment that your little heiress will be inconsolable. She must find some one else for herself, that's all.'

'It is not only that,' said Dorrien, with a sense of shame, 'but the fact is that the little heiress, as you call her, is in a manner a necessity to me—an heiress of some sort is, anyhow; and really I had thought I liked her; I did like her—I like her still; if it could stop at liking we should get on very well, and all that sort of thing; and the governor nearly had a fit from delight—we have been fast friends ever since; the Schofields have been over here—my mother has called on them—everybody knows, they must know what it is for—oh, confound it! the net is round me on every side, and how to get out of it, Alverstoke, I don't know—sometimes I think I don't care.' The last words were uttered in a tone which demanded recognition.

'What do you owe?' said Alverstoke, abruptly.

'Three or four thou. It is nothing, of course; but I have not as many hundreds in the world. The allowance Sir Arthur gives me—well, he can't help it, but it's beggarly. That was why I left the Coldstreams. I couldn't stop in on that allowance. He thinks I am going to put it all right now, poor old fellow! I—upon my word, I'm sorry for him.'

'But I don't see,' said Alverstoke, after a moment, 'why there should be much of a disappointment anyway. Why should Miss Lavenham not have a fortune as well as Miss Schofield? They are relations——'

'—Only distant cousins.'

'Never mind; what I mean is, the bachelor Schofield uncle is a rich man—I know Joseph, everyone knows Joseph, and an uncommon good sort Joseph is—well, is it not he who has adopted your Miss Lavenham?'

'My Miss Lavenham?' ejaculated Dorrien, wincing. He was in a humour to wince at a pin-prick.

'You know whom I mean. The Carnforths told me that he had adopted the sisters, and that they had come to settle down here.'

'Even if he has,' said Dorrien sadly, 'I don't know—I don't see—of course he might settle upon her—but then if not—and,



Alverstoke, if I once do it, if I once let myself go—I do not know where or how or what would happen next. I have nothing to offer but a paltry title, and barren family honours that no one would think worth the picking up. You know well enough about us. Everyone knows about us. How is it possible for me to go to a guardian and say, “I am a suitor without a sixpence, and with a handsome halter of debts in its place; will you let me marry into your family?”

‘You proposed saying as much to the Schofields, however,’ observed Alverstoke, drily.

‘Pshaw! What did it matter to *them*? I only need to speak at any moment,’ and a smile curled his lip.

‘Your vanity is insufferable, Dorrien. ‘But come, I am glad to see you take things more rationally. Now tell me this: do you, with your present feelings, with the contempt you feel for these people, with your certainty of their caring only for your position and prospective title, and with your actual and positive preference for another, do you’—and his voice suddenly rose—‘do you *dare* to insult that girl by asking her to be your wife?’

Dorrien started, and changed colour.

‘Dare!’ he murmured, confusedly. ‘I told you that I—that she—Alverstoke, you should not have said “dare!”’

‘I say it again. It would be a blackguardly thing to do. Stop, Harry,’ as Dorrien wrenched away the hand which had till then lain within his arm, ‘I don’t say that you would be the blackguard to do it. You told me just now that you were torn in bits by the fiends who quarrelled over you. It is these fiends, or one of them, who has set you on to this piece of devilry.’ He paused, half closed the eyes which had been opened wide, and added in his sleepest drawl, ‘Don’t do it, Harry.’

A restive movement.

‘All right. I know you will say you have as good as done it already—but you have not. You have just stopped in time.’

‘Oh—“in time!” What do you call “in time”? I am in such a hole that I see no way out of it on either side.’

‘There is no very creditable way, certainly. You will have to eat humble pie, and you have the grace to be ashamed of yourself. That’s as it should be; grace before meat, you know. But if you keep quiet for a little, slacken off at the one house, and don’t go near the other——’

‘Which am I not to go near?’

'Miss Lavenham's, of course. It would not be decent to be seen over there too soon and too often.'

Dorrien laughed aloud.

'Why, I am going there to-day!' he said.

'You are going to——'

'—To Flodden Hall. To Mr. Joseph Schofield's, to see Mr. Joseph Schofield's lovely niece. To—to——' and again he laughed idiotically.

'I don't see what there is to laugh at,' observed Alverstoke.

'Don't you? I do. I see a lot. It's awfully funny to walk on the brink of a powder mill, don't you know? It is perfectly irresistible not to throw in a match. I never found anything half so amusing. So here goes for the match. Hurrah for the match! What the devil are you looking at me like that for, eh?' in another tone.

'If you must make a fool of yourself, Harry, I have got to help you, I suppose,' said Alverstoke, stroking his moustache.

'To help me!' Dorrien was sobered in an instant. 'Did you'—he pressed closer to his friend's side—'did you say to *help* me, Alverstoke?'

Alverstoke smiled.

'Good heavens, Archie,—if—if you are going to *help* me——'

'I suppose I have got to help you, my boy.'

## CHAPTER XX.

### CRUEL MONICA.

If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see  
That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.—CONGREVE.

'AND now for Daisy Schofield,' said Monica Lavenham to herself, that same morning about eleven o'clock. She had ordered round her horse, and she was going alone to The Grange.

'No, Bell, my dear, I don't want your company, so you will please not to want mine. You are not in a mood to ride to-day, and I am not in a mood to walk. Too much dissipation does not suit either of us. This morning I feel as if I had been out at a dozen balls, and had danced, danced, danced till the sun was up and spreading. I had such dreams,' and a smile stole over her cheek.

'I think I can guess who figured in them,' said Bell, astutely.

'Can you? How clever!' And Monica laughed a ringing laugh. 'Would anyone else guess, think you? Would Daisy Schofield, for instance? Daisy would like to hear about last night's dinner party, Isabel. It is my solemn duty to tell Daisy about the party.'

'It will be very cruel of you, if you do.'

'Not at all. The cruelty would be in not telling. Somebody who shall be nameless is behaving in a very shabby manner to somebody else who shall be also nameless. Is it not only fair, kind, and just to let that somebody know?'

'Well—yes,' conceded Bell, dubiously. 'Yes, I suppose so. But still, supposing, Monica, only supposing that she cares for him, a little.'

'She care for him? Nonsense!' said Monica, with sudden asperity. 'Do you suppose that a silly little vulgar chit of a Daisy Schofield could possibly appreciate—pshaw! I mean——'

'You mean "appreciate,"' nodded Bell, smiling. 'I know perfectly well what you mean. You think because Daisy is rather an ordinary, insignificant girl——'

'—Anybody would do for her, and she would do for anybody,' scoffed Monica. 'Mr. Dorrien' (no longer Harry) 'is not much, he is not brilliant, he is not wildly intellectual, but he is—he is——'

'—Very agreeable to Miss Monica Lavenham.'

'No, no, no; only passable; only just bearable. Somehow I rather like him. I like him in a way. There is something about him——'

'—Monica, Monica!'

'I am not going to give in to it, anyhow,' said Monica, with resolution. 'Mr. Dorrien shall see that. As he told me a lie, he had to smart for it; and it is some consolation to me in this desert isle on which we have been cast, that I have been enabled to punish a wicked man. Mr. Dorrien was undergoing part of his punishment last night, he shall have the rest to-day.'

'*Monica!*' Bell bounded from her seat.

'Oh, yes, he is coming over this afternoon,' said Monica, coolly. 'He asked to come—in a whisper. He had no business to whisper. It was not his place to follow us into the hall, and fasten my cloak. Mr. Carnforth saw us to the carriage; we did not need Mr. Dorrien's assistance also.'

'And yet you let him come this afternoon?'

'Certainly I let him come. I particularly wished him to

come. And that is why I am going out this morning. When I have seen Daisy Schofield, I shall be in the right kind of mood for Mr. Dorrien.'

'Monica, what do you mean by all this?'

Monica paused and looked at her sister.

'What do I mean?' she said, to gain time.

'Yes; what do you mean? You are trying to blind me, as you are trying to blind all the rest, as I sometimes fancy you are trying to blind yourself. Why are you doing it? What do you mean by it?'

'Oh, I mean by it'—Monica was herself again—'only a little mischief, my dear. Mischief is the spice of life. "Shake in sin to give it zest," says the poet. If one had to be eternally good, how very stupid the world would be! Now and then one really must break out, dear Bell. It is one of the laws of nature: witness volcanic eruptions, earthquakes——'

'—Oh, do be quiet, and answer me!'

'Nay, that's just what I cannot do. I cannot *both* be quiet and answer you. Not at one and the same time, my dear sister. To tell the truth, I doubt if I could satisfy you either way to-day.'

'You are so flighty—so silly.'

'So I am. Ta-ta! There is William with the horses. By the time I come home,' kissing her sister's brow, 'I shall have worked off both flightiness and silliness. A little talk with Daisy will be to me what "letting blood" was in olden time to feverish patients. I shall be cool, collected, myself, by—this afternoon.' And she cantered off.

It was a dewy, fresh September morning, and the skylarks were mounting into the pure blue overhead from every field path and hedge-row. Daisy Schofield had sauntered out among the dahlias and hollyhocks, under the pretence of gathering flowers to place within the rooms, but in reality to be alone and unmolested. The poor girl suffered much from the curiosity and conjecture of others at this period. Dorrien she knew no longer cared for her, and she also knew to whom was due the change which had within the past few weeks come over him. But no one else had discerned, no one else so much as suspected, anything amiss; and although she would have given much to have instilled into the minds of others an uneasiness and disquietude which might both have silenced remark and paved the way for disappointment, she could not do it.

The affair must run its course; she must bear her part in it;

George must find out by slow degrees; Mrs. Schofield must be allowed to wonder and exclaim; the younger girls and boys must each be expected to have their word.

Well, she would perforce endure as best she might, as many another had done before her. It was a bitter prospect. She raised her eyes and beheld Monica—Monica, to whom she owed it all.

‘Let me get off here, and walk about the garden with you,’ cried Monica, cheerily. ‘Such a lovely morning! I have had such a delightful ride. What are you doing? Gathering flowers? How bright your flower-beds still are! Do look at the cobwebs on the wing! They are flying everywhere this morning, and they glitter in the sun like diamonds. Shall we come down this tangled path?’

Daisy assented, and they walked forward.

‘We were at a dinner party last night,’ her cousin chatted on—‘such a jolly dinner party—at the Carnforths’. Do you know the Carnforths? No, by the way, they said not. They had nobody from the neighbourhood but ourselves and Mr. Dorrien—by the way, Mr. Dorrien can hardly be called “from the neighbourhood,” however, can he? Ten miles takes anyone out of a neighbourhood—especially in this sort of county, overrun with houses.’

‘Was Mr. Dorrien there?’

‘Very much there! He took me in to dinner. I had him all the evening too. What a flirt he is!’

‘A flirt!’

‘My dear Daisy, *you* to say that! I thought no one knew better than you what Mr. Dorrien was.’

‘I did not know he was a flirt.’

‘Good gracious! What did you think he was, then?’

‘A true man.’

‘My dear child, you have hit the nail upon the exact head,’ replied Monica, merrily. ‘Mr. Dorrien is emphatically a true man, wherefore he is a flirt. Likewise every true woman is a flirt. I am a flirt; you are a flirt——’

‘I am not. You may be. But I don’t think Mr. Dorrien is,’ in a curious tone which to Monica’s ear was fresh cause for mirth.

‘If you had seen him last night, my dear,’ replied the latter, with gay, significant emphasis—‘oh, I wish you had seen him last night!’

‘If I had seen him last night,’ replied her cousin, slowly turning to look at the brilliant face beside her, ‘I should not have altered my mind.’

'You think not? Daisy—I—I should like to open your eyes.'

'Open them. It will do no harm now.'

'Do you think that Harry Dorrien is in love with you?'

The answer came in a low, clear voice, 'No.'

Obviously it was not that which had been expected.

'No? But,' said Monica, slightly discomfited, 'but I thought—I understood—Bell understood—you certainly told Bell that he—that you—that he had given you reason to suppose he was.'

'Perhaps I did,' a slight flush on the cheek. 'I did think so once, I do not now.'

'There, that is what I mean; he is a flirt.'

'He is not a flirt; he never cared for me, but he wished to marry me.'

'Why, that is what I thought, Daisy; and I often wished to warn you in case you imagined otherwise, but I felt that unless I could give you some grounds for it——' She paused.

'And now you have the grounds?'

Monica began to respect her companion. There was a calm dignity in the young girl's bearing which was every moment becoming more and more apparent. To the above inquiry, so steadily, simply made, it was difficult to find an answer.

'I am afraid I have,' she replied at length, in some confusion; 'I—I hardly know how to say it. But if you had been with us at the Carnforths' last night, you would have seen, you could not have helped seeing, the truth. Mr. Dorrien loves to amuse himself, and—and—I amuse him now more than you do.'

'You are wrong, cousin.' Monica happening to glance downwards perceived that the two small bare hands, Daisy's pretty hands of which her mother was so vain, were holding each other fast, as the speaker paused to take breath. Then she went on. 'Mr. Dorrien never amused himself with me; he is not now amusing himself with you. He tried to love me, he *does* love you; that is all.'

Not a tear, not a sigh escaped. The words fell stonily upon the ear.

For a few minutes their effect was such as utterly to confound their hearer. Monica had pictured a scene so totally different, that she neither knew which way to look, nor what tone to adopt. Twice she opened her lips to essay some refutation, some argument, but twice the attempt died away; and as the two had now reached the end of the little path they were traversing, they stood



side by side gazing into the fields beyond, without a word, the silence becoming every instant more oppressive.

At last Monica spoke.

'Daisy,' she said—and for all she could do her voice trembled a little—'do you blame me?'

'I do not blame anyone. No one is to blame.'

'No one? Not Mr. Dorrien? Nor—nor——?' stammering.

'Nor you,' said Daisy, calmly. 'He saw you; was it likely he should ever think again of me?'

'But—but——,' every moment Monica's astonishment deepened, while the blush of self-conviction dyed her cheek—'but, dear Daisy, I—oh, how shall I explain?'

'You do not need to explain, Monica. I have explained it all to myself. Long ago I saw it. I have known it—can you guess for how long?'

'No,' faltered Monica, a fresh suffusion on her brow. 'No, I cannot guess. I had no idea even now.'

'No; you thought because we are rough, homely people, people without fine manners and knowledge of the world, that we—that we have no pride, that we would let our feelings be seen by all who pass by.'

'No, no, no; not that.'

'That, at all events, *you* would see them,' said Daisy, with a half smile. 'That is why you came to-day. You imagined that I perceived nothing of the change in Mr. Dorrien, and that you would be the first to inform me of your conquest; was it not so?'

Monica was silent, crimson.

'He turned from me the very first moment that he met you,' continued her companion, in the same deliberate accents. 'He tried to hide it; and the day we were at your house I let him try, because I did not choose to have those who were present remarking and conjecturing, but I knew in my heart that he neither listened to me nor noticed me. He was following your every movement. We went over to Cullindon; we went, for we had to return Lady Dorrien's call, and I had no choice but to allow Mr. Dorrien to go on as he had been doing. Indeed, once or twice I almost thought, I half hoped—but never mind. That other day, the day when you were there, would have betrayed him to anyone.'

Monica hung her head.

'You saw all this, and yet ——?'

'And yet—what? What could I do? What can I do now?'

I receive Mr. Dorrien as I always did. If I altered my reception of him, or my manner towards him, he would immediately guess the truth, and do you think I could bear *that*?’

‘But he had given you cause to—to expect——?’

Daisy held up her head quickly. ‘He had not asked me to marry him; until a man does that no woman should show he has given her cause to expect anything.’

‘My dear Daisy!’

‘That is what I think, Monica. It may not be what some people, what fashionable people, think: I know nothing about those sort of people. But I should never, never—if I died for it’—her voice strengthened—‘show a man that I—I expected anything of him until he offered it to me.’

Again her auditor was silent from amazement. Could this be Daisy Schofield? Could this clear utterance, with its ring of resolution, its steadfastness, its quiet expression of a power and force within, proceed from her hitherto despised and neglected cousin? What womanliness, what nobility! Every after-thought was swallowed up in the sense of wonder, almost of awe, with which she regarded the new creature which moment by moment was dawning upon her vision. This, Daisy? *Daisy*? She felt bewildered, overwhelmed. She could not speak—could hardly think.

At length Daisy herself renewed the conversation. ‘Monica, I am sorry that it has been you, because from the first you never cared for me, and it will make it the harder to bear for—for the rest of us.’

‘Make what the harder?’ muttered Monica, passing her hand over her forehead. She felt as if she were in a dream.

‘Your marrying Mr. Dorrien.’

‘My marrying Mr. Dorrien? I—you—Daisy, are you mad? What made you think of my marrying Mr. Dorrien?’

‘Why should you not, Monica?’

‘I would not marry him if he were at my feet to-morrow.’

‘He will be at your feet to-day.’

Oh, if she could only have denied it! Monica bit her lip till the blood came. ‘Look here,’ she cried, passionately. ‘Look here, and listen to me. I am not sure that we understand each other. You suppose that I—pah! I am ashamed to suggest it—that I, knowing what Harry Dorrien is, how he has behaved, all that will be said of him—that I—that he—that we—that he has only to speak, to have me fall into his arms? That he has but to

turn from you to me, to win one of us, each with equal ease—you or I—it matters not which? The thing is preposterous—outrageous,' walking rapidly on.

'I do not think that the thing is either preposterous or outrageous,' replied her cousin, with some emphasis, 'if he loves you—if you love him.'

'I tell you it is outrageous. Is he to get his own way in everything? Is he to make you a laughing-stock——'

'Nay,' said Daisy, with gentle dignity, 'I am no laughing-stock.'

'You are the best, the noblest girl!' burst forth Monica, with an impetuosity she could not restrain. 'You are—I cannot tell you what you are, nor what I think of you. You see your lover enticed away, beguiled from your side, yourself shamefully deserted; you see in me a victorious rival, a triumphant, disdainful, merciless rival—and all you say and all you think of is that he and I should be happy together. I tell you we shall *not* be happy thus. That man shall *not* have the reward he hopes for. He does not deserve it—I do not deserve it—both of us——.' She could not articulate more.

A hand took hold of hers.

'Dear Monica, I think I shall love you now,' said Daisy.

'Good heavens! And this is the girl he might have won, and did not think worth the winning!' cried Monica, almost beside herself with remorse and burning mortification. 'Daisy, listen to me. I did tempt him. I did allow myself to please him. When I saw, as you did, as who could help seeing, that he was beginning to like me, to care for me—instead of checking him and looking coldly upon him, I threw myself in his way, and—and allowed the rest. I thought—for I will tell the whole truth about this shameful affair—that you did not really understand, nor—what shall I say? I do not mean appreciate, but some word of the kind—Mr. Dorrien's character. He is a curious man; I did not fancy there could be much sympathy between you. You may believe me or not——'

'—Of course I believe you, Monica.'

'But now—but now,' continued Monica, her rapid steps keeping pace with her rapid utterance, 'you cannot suppose I should be so miserably imprudent as to let this folly go any further. It has been already bad enough. I have done that which will degrade me in my own eyes for the rest of my life. If I had known sooner——'—in broken sentences—'if I had not been so

utterly blind—blinded by my own vanity, my pride, my—oh, what a fool I have been!—what a fool I have been!’ She tossed aside a spray, and wrenched it in two as she spoke. A tumult was raging within her bosom.

Nor was she altogether alone in her emotion. It is true that her earlier perception of the truth had enabled Daisy to display, and even to experience, a calmness and self-control which had placed her on a level above her companion at the beginning of the interview. The unconscious dignity of her demeanour, and her deliberate, unimpassioned speech, had done her infinite service in Monica’s eyes, prepared as they had been for jealous discomfiture and possible reproach,—but, young as she was, she would have been less than a woman had such a scene not made her falter.

Not only had her lover, the man who had taught her to love him—nay, taught her the very nature of love itself—been allured from her side by this beautiful, triumphant creature here present, but, strange to say, she too could have loved Monica had Monica willed it.

Monica had for her a strange attraction. She had already done more than justice to her cousin’s beauty and brilliance; she had noted the fine nature underlying all the accumulation of evil piled upon the surface. No little trait of sisterly generosity nor of unselfishness had been lost upon Daisy. No trace of tenderness nor of sweetness, such as would now and again peep out from beneath an exterior overlaid with heartless maxims and designs, had passed unobserved. She had yearned for a word or look of notice. Monica’s disdainful indifference had been felt to her heart’s core.

And now here was Monica humbled, shamed, and penitent before her. A tear, which nothing else had brought to her eye, gathered and hung upon the lash. Unwilling to take out a handkerchief, she put up her finger to steal it away,—but Monica saw the finger. It touched her more than would have done the loosing of a flood.

In another moment her arms were round Daisy’s neck, and a storm of passionate self-reproaches were being poured into her cousin’s ear. For some minutes neither could speak coherently, possibly neither heard what the other said.

At length, ‘Let us sit down here,’ said Daisy, indicating a little arbour hidden in a sequestered nook, ‘and talk—that is if you will talk—dear cousin, freely. I am sure you love me now, and I think I have always loved you. It will make us both the happier—it will, I hope, make *you* quite happy, if we understand each other.

No one will then be able to interfere with us, and no one will dare to try to make mischief between us. Shall we talk, Monica?’

Of course they talked. The sun rose high in the heavens and found the two still there, still engrossed, absorbed, regardless of time, hand in hand, lip fervently meeting lip. It was to Monica the revelation of another life.

‘I must go,’ she said at length, when warned by unmistakable signs of the lateness of the hour. ‘I *must* go, but’—and her fingers once more closed upon the hand she held—‘but I could have stayed here, with you, dear Daisy, all day. I—it is so wonderful to me. You cannot tell, you will never know, what I have learned to feel this morning. No one ever spoke to me as you have spoken. No one ever showed me my own pitiful, mean, narrow, worthless self as you have shown it. No, don’t shrink from my saying so; I know it was not your meaning to do anything of the kind; but—well, no matter. You shall teach me more than this, you dear, sweet, humble, little floweret. Now I know why you are called Daisy. You are the sweetest Daisy——’

‘—Please don’t flatter me, Monica,’ but it was a shining face that looked fondly up into the face above. ‘See, there is your groom and the horses. They must have sent him to look for us. Oh, here is another messenger! Monica, dear, one word more before you go; you will not mind? It is about Mr. Dorrien.’

‘What about him, Daisy?’ Monica glanced furtively round, the very name seemed contraband.

‘If there should be no obstacle, I mean if he has enough to offer, or if—if anything else should make it easy for him, you would——?’

Monica made no answer.

‘Promise,’ whispered Daisy, holding her back, as she was walking on. ‘Promise.’

And at last the promise came.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

‘I THOUGHT I WOULD JUST GIVE YOU THE HINT, MONICA.’

Defer not till to-morrow to be wise;

To-morrow’s sun to thee may never rise.—CONGREVE.

AFTER such a morning who could be cool and composed?

Monica flew home on the wings of the wind, but she neither marked the ground beneath her feet, nor the sky above her head. When she had passed the same way a few hours before, she had

had eyes for every glittering cobweb and bespangled hedge-row; now eyes, ears, all were absorbed in one thought, one retrospect.

She was still in a maze of bewilderment, giddy, dazed. Bit by bit she pieced together the whole of the strange interview which had been so different to all it should have been, till she would feel one moment as though even the top of her horse's speed were scarce swift enough to keep pace with her impatience to enlighten as she had been herself enlightened, and again would almost shrink from the sight of Isabel's astonishment and incredulity.

It was, however, some comfort to recollect that Bell had always said her sister did Daisy less than justice. Many a time had Monica, as she well knew, disregarded the gentle protest which her sister would vainly attempt to slip in, when *The Grange* was under discussion. Bell had endeavoured to discriminate, Monica would hear of no discrimination. Ultimately Bell had learned to take Monica's view.

Well, she must take the new view, that was all. It would be tiresome to explain, tiresome and something more,—there being but little hope of opening all at once eyes which had, as it were, been born blind; and the vision which had been that morning spread before Monica's own astonished gaze had been one beneath which every heart-string had thrilled and vibrated. But she would do her best with her sister. At any rate she could always by tone and eye daunt Bell. Failing every other argument, sheer force of will had ever been held in reserve by this masterful girl, and if necessary, she told herself, it should not be wanting on the present occasion.

Underlying all was the memory of her promise.

It was late when she reached home, and luncheon, she was informed, was proceeding; but, being in a hurry to dismount and run into the dining-room, she did not catch a communication which followed. It was accordingly a surprise, and at such a moment, if the truth be told, not an altogether agreeable one, to find her uncle seated at the table with her sister. He had never returned home at that hour before; what had possessed him to choose such a day for the innovation? Perhaps he wanted an afternoon ride; and, if so, would Bell, who had complained of headache in the morning, wish her sister to go out again, taking the other horse?

There was a visitor expected who would not be well pleased with such an arrangement; and with this whole train of thought flashing through her mind in the brief instant of her perceiving



Mr. Schofield discussing his cutlet and tomatoes, Monica had some ado to check the first expression of her countenance, as well as to change the pure astonishment of her 'You here?' into a note of congratulation and rejoicing.

'I'm here,' replied her uncle, happily unconscious. 'Here I am; and a very pleasant change I find it from where I usually am. That uncomfortable feeling has quite passed off, Isabel, my dear. I had a sort of dizziness and ringing in my ears when I went in to Liverpool this morning, Monica; though I said nothing about it to disturb either of you, for I knew it was only stomach, so would wear off; but I just got a quiet prescription from my own chemist, and he said I might as well go out early, and take it easy for a day or two. No bad idea. I'll take my holiday this way, maybe. I told him I had had no holiday to speak of this year. I explained how it was that I had been kept to my work later in the year than usual, without getting away. I have had but a week since Easter. A week is nothing—not but that I shall enjoy my holiday at home as much or more than if we had gone to Scarborough,'—hastily, as he fancied he read in their faces that the sisters were conscience-stricken; 'it will do me every bit as much good; and it will be a novelty, a perfect novelty. I have never had a holiday at home before.'

'I am very sorry you should need it, dear uncle,' said Monica tranquilly. 'But I am sure Bell and I will do our best to make it agreeable to you.' All the time she could not help thinking he had chosen rather an unfortunate time to be always about, and at home.

'My dear, you *always* make it agreeable. There is no occasion for you to "do your best,"' said Mr. Schofield, the pride and admiration with which he habitually regarded his nieces infusing itself into his tone. 'But for you,' he added, smilingly shaking his head, 'I don't know that I should have been so easy to manage in this matter. But, thought I, I must take care of myself for their sakes. The longer I live, the better it will be for my poor dear Annie's children,' and he looked from one to the other tenderly, while they almost fancied a tremor in the gaze.

The same thought occurred to each, namely, that they had never heard him so speak of their mother before. Also Monica fancied—it might have been a mere fancy—but she felt as if, while listening to the softly spoken words, she beheld in the speaker an old man. She had never thought of her uncle Schofield as an old man. She was almost sure that he had not looked

old before. Was it that she had been indifferent, unobserving all round, hitherto? Or was it that there really was some sort of change?

By a sudden impulse she found herself at his side, and the next moment had stooped and kissed his forehead. He caught her hand as she turned away. Then she was sure that his voice did tremble. 'Thank you, my dear,' he said. 'Thank you—thank you. You will find that I am not ungrateful.'

'Ungrateful? Oh, uncle!' from both.

'Monica,' continued her uncle, still holding her hand so as to prevent her moving from his side, 'when you have finished here, would you give me your company for half an hour or so? I partly came out—that is to say—yes,' after a moment's reflection, 'I *did* partly come out in order to have a little talk, a little business talk, with you. Nothing very serious, my dear,' seeing that she had become grave, and was even inclined to be apprehensive. 'Nothing to alarm you. I don't fancy you will object to anything I have to say, nor yet will Bell. I ask to speak to you alone, Monica, because I take it that we should be more at our ease, just the two of us, than if there was a third party. Bell will not think me rude——'

'—Oh, *dear*, no, uncle.' Infinite relief and emphasis on Bell's part.

'And though it concerns her as much, or very nearly as much, as you, Monica,' proceeded her uncle, shaking kindly the hand he held, 'well, she need not be bothered with any more than she likes, if *you* understand. Is that right, Monica?'

Monica felt as if every mouthful would choke her after this. What was coming? What was she to prepare for? What to guard against? Surely she had had enough already for one day without this, and without something which might be in store presently. The day was yet young, and she had already undergone one great revulsion of feeling; was she to be wrung and strained anew? And then—and then—another thought sent her back into the bygone evening, and awoke again its slumbering echoes and pulsations. Supposing that Dorrien were coming, as who could say he was not coming, to—to—how should she meet him? How restrain him?

How tell him the cold, prudent, bitter truth? It had been easy enough to picture herself saying anything, behaving with any kind of cruel propriety, and mocking her lover by every sort of feminine home-thrust, when contemplating the scene in her

mind's eye, as with jocund, devil-may-care spirits she had set the world at defiance that merry morn ; but it was a different Monica who now alike dreaded and hung upon the coming interview.

Supposing, only supposing, she durst allow herself to care for Dorrien ? Heretofore, to do her so much justice, she had steadily stamped down the idea whenever it arose in her heart. Stoutly she had maintained to her own conscience that she was but serving rightly a false pretender and double-faced lover. She had hardly intended, indeed, to let him get as far as he had done, but as to entering into an engagement, as to thinking of marriage—pride and prudence alike forbade the supposition. Pride had now been softened ; every unkind, unworthy thought in regard to Daisy Schofield had been melted and fused into a glow of tenderest endearment, and she had promised Daisy that she would, at least, be just to Dorrien.

He had been more sinned against than sinning, wherefore she would torture him no longer, but—and to her infinite surprise she found herself murmuring ‘but’ with a sigh. She felt a little pity even for her own self, in that something could never happen which until that morning she had not supposed she could have willed to happen. To cut short enigmas, it was useless to think of Dorrien, and she had only just discovered that but for the uselessness she might have thought of him.

‘Shall we stop in, or go out, my dear ?’ said Mr. Schofield, who was in waiting as his niece descended to the hall at the expiration of an hour. ‘You have taken off your habit, but you are warmly enough dressed,’ eyeing a smart autumn tweed, which even to his inexperienced sight was infinitely becoming to the wearer. ‘What about boots ? Oh, shoes ? But those fine shoes, are they thick enough ? The paths get a little chill beneath the feet at this season ; my feet have been cold all day. If you would really rather go out, I can wait while you change ?’

She disclaimed the idea, she had put on thick out-door shoes on purpose. Her garden hat was in the hall, and they passed out through the garden door.

Mr. Schofield walked with a brisk step. Obviously he had recovered from the musing mood which had been perceptible at the luncheon table, and was once more his usual cheerful self. He was even more chatty and genial than usual. It seemed to Monica, who was unable to emulate such composure, as if he voluntarily lingered here and there, exchanged a word with gardeners whom he might have passed, and paused to examine

work which might have waited, in order to prolong a pleasurable moment—the moment being to her fraught with nervous anxiety and disquietude. It was a relief, although it made her internally start and shake, when he at length opened the real object of the interview.

‘My dear Monica—ahem! I am going to talk to you—ahem! ahem! as if I were your father. I consider that I am now in the position of your father.’ Here Mr. Schofield paused, the paternal strain not being his *forte*. Moreover, with the consciousness of being a clumsy performer, he considered that it might now be dispensed with. Then he started afresh. ‘To tell the truth, Monica, I have been thinking about you and your sister for some time past. Your poor mother was my only sister, and you are her only children.’ Here the speaker paused again.

Monica listened in silence.

‘I should wish—I should like—I intend to do for you girls as if you were my own,’ burst forth Mr. Schofield suddenly. ‘There, my dear, that is what I want to say, and what I wish you to understand.’

‘My dear uncle!’

Great as was the importance of the news—and its consequence to herself and to her sister could, as Monica well knew, scarcely be over-estimated—the first thought which arose in her heart was an odd one. It was nothing more nor less than this: ‘But why, in the world, did you take the trouble of coming out to tell me this at mid-day, when in the evening would have done fully as well, supposing I were to be told at all?’

‘My dear uncle!’ was, however, all she said.

‘Ay, that is about it,’ proceeded Joseph, in his homely phraseology, having disburdened himself of the worst at one throw, ‘that is the long and the short of it, though there are a few details which I think it may be as well for you to know; so now, if you please,’ with an obvious intention of checking any response on her part, ‘now, if you please, we will go into them.’

‘But, dear uncle, let me say one word.’

‘Oh, you shall say your word, my dear—you shall say your word. Naturally you would like to tell me you are pleased. I am sure you are pleased, and I am heartily glad of it; but you had best let me run on a while first, and then you will know what to be pleased at. I am a fairly rich man, Monica.’

‘Yes, uncle,’ softly.

‘I can make you and Bell very comfortable—ve-ry com-

fortable,' proceeded he. 'If I live some years longer, you will come in for very considerable fortunes; for the money is well invested, and as secure as I can make it. My eggs are in a good many baskets; and anyhow there's a middling penny in Consols. But that is not what I dare say you care most to hear—though you are a sensible girl, Monica, and can understand the value of good investments as well as anybody,—still what I fancy you will care the most about is this,' and his voice dropped to an impressive undertone. 'If necessary'—he paused, thought in his kind heart 'I will not look at her,' then resumed—'if required, I can make a very handsome marriage settlement on—on my sister's eldest daughter.'

The hot blood rushed to Monica's brow. Now, as by a flash of revelation, she saw it all. Now she perceived why such a communication had brooked of no delay. She had early discovered that the name of Dorrien invariably produced a satisfaction and exhilaration in her uncle's demeanour which plainly denoted that he was not averse to the young man in the light of a suitor; but, worldly-wise and versed in the ways of a selfish world, Monica had hitherto laid but little stress upon the circumstance.

Her uncle might not object to an alliance with an impoverished family, but he would hardly expect *all* the money to be on his side. He might very well say—as a matter of fact she had supposed he would say, were he spoken to on the point—'I give my consent to your marrying my niece, provided you are able to support her suitably,' and accordingly she had resolved that he should not be spoken to. Should Dorrien have the presumption—but, no, he could not have the presumption. Should he be so infatuated—but he must not be allowed to be so infatuated.

Her mind had been in a whirl, and through it all she had allowed the so-called friendship to creep stealthily on. Now, wonder of wonders, what was her uncle saying? What had Daisy Schofield said? She tried to piece the two together: to surmise if any words or hints could have passed between them; to cogitate whether Dorrien himself could have accosted her uncle. The ground seemed to recede from beneath her feet.

'Oh, my dear, you must not take amiss the plain speaking of an old man.' Strangely sounded the voice; strangely felt the touch of the hand which was laid upon her shoulder. 'You are not angry with me, Monica?' a new concern infusing itself into her uncle's accents.

'Angry? Oh, my dear sir—my dear, kind, *kind* friend!' both

hands clung to his arm; 'it is only that I do not know what words to use, nor how to use them,' said Monica, in a full voice, for indeed her throat was swelling with the effort to repress emotion. 'It is so much too much—so infinitely more than we deserve. No one has ever loved us and cared for us as you do; and you speak as if—as if *we*—what are we? We have no claim on you, no right to come upon you for anything. We only came because no one else would have us,—no one wanted us,——'

'Never mind—never mind,' pressing her arm kindly.

'To think that you should be such a friend, such a more than father,' proceeded Monica, with overflowing heart. 'Our own father never cared for us; the little we might have had he threw away and wasted. It is to his selfishness we owe our present dependence on the charity of relations, whom he——'

'Well, well. Well, but he was your father, you know,' hinted Joseph, with old-fashioned notions on such a subject. 'After all, he was your father, whatever he was, Monica.'

'Uncle Lavenham threw us off directly we grew to be incumbrances,' proceeded Monica, with rising excitement and disregard of all beside. 'Even when we were under his roof, he grudged the expense to which we put him, and the trouble we gave him. We don't mean to give trouble. Poor Bell and I try to please,——' Her lip shook.

Mr. Schofield gulped down something in his own throat.

'I am very glad we have had this little talk,' he said as soon as he could speak; 'very glad indeed. Now you know how I feel, and we shall be very happy together, and no need for more words about the matter. You are just to be my daughters, and that means it all. Only if—you know—*if*—ahem!—if anything should happen—if anybody *should* come—such things do occur,' smiling benevolently, 'wanting to take one of my daughters from me, you will know what to tell him. So I thought,' concluded the speaker, with an air of elaborate unconcern, 'I thought I had better just give you the hint, Monica.'

(To be continued.)



## On Autographs.

### I.

GRAY has written his elegy. He has commemorated the *memento mori* in the country churchyard of those who have 'gone over to the majority,' as men put it, with the presumptuous numerical speculation which ignores the possibilities of a present and a future, of whose limit of life no man holds the measuring line. But it remains for some poet, perhaps unborn, to write a new elegy, and in the light of his inspiration to interpret the pathos and the humour and the irony of those other mementoes, of the great, or at least of the notorious, which lie collected in those literary cemeteries in which the autograph collector buries his possessions or advertises his spoils.

It is true that the squalid and rapacious character which too often belongs to the collectors of such memorials has obscured the picturesque aspect of his chase, and that the lists of 'autograph letters' for sale have intruded ideas into our minds which have desecrated the resting-places of these relics, faded or fresh, and have transformed them into precincts where anatomists drive their bargains for skeletons and physiologists select subjects for dissection—not infrequently for vivisection.

But, however that may be, the fact nevertheless remains that, to those who look below, a great part of the strange humour of life's relations is epitomised in these motley assortments, where the *dramatis personæ* are represented, each by his own signature, in fragmentary moods of grief or jesting, of anger, or hate, or love—moods deep and light, serious and volatile, where are found records of tears long forgotten by the mourner; of wrongs unrighted, forgotten by their champions; of jests from which the laughter has faded, and anecdotes robbed by time of their point; or, as it may often be more accurately described, of their edge.

Take, for example, the collection of manuscript letters, rather than autographs, which lie before us. They are, it is true, bound

together by one link, and possess one characteristic in common; for, with comparatively few exceptions, they are addressed to a single correspondent, and the reflection of his personality lies mirrored, in varying degrees of strength, across the whole collection. It is the transitory principle of cohesion which unites for the time elements so various, sometimes so antagonistic—the rallying-point round which the assemblage gathers. For a moment they meet, like the personages represented at a fancy ball; then the kaleidoscope is shaken; its broken splinters of colour separate to unite again in fresh patterns; the crimson triangle detaches itself from the blue star to join the yellow octagon, and the green square mingles with what once formed the crystallised design of a radiating diamond.

It is a heterogeneous procession that passes us by in irregular order, or, more properly speaking, in no order at all, except that of the alphabet. No precedence is here given, none demanded; the living and the dead, the old and the young, the comparatively insignificant and the illustrious, men and women, mingle together in the crowd, whilst the memorials of each are as various in their nature and character as those they represent. Here and there we meet with a letter important enough in subject and treatment to claim attention on its own merits, independently of the name which stands below it, whilst as frequently it is the personality of the writer alone which lends an interest to the trivialities he registers. Nothing is added by these last to the sum of human knowledge or wisdom, they were never intended for publication, would be out of place in any serious collection of letters, and would never, as the phrase goes, be included in a man's 'remains;' and yet this driftwood of literature possesses a value altogether its own. In the more serious achievements of the literary artist he leaves behind him a monument in which we see him as philosopher, poet, scientist—what you will—he appears before us draped in the costume he has selected with due regard to the effect, and as that most becoming to the character he desires to assume; but as we read these hurried notes we seem to penetrate behind the scenes, and to catch a passing glimpse, not of the man as artist, but of the artist as man—the man out of whom (not always, as Mrs. Browning has taught us, without detriment to the raw material) the artist is manufactured. And we are grateful for the glimpse.

Not in real life could the irony of fate, or of chance, whichever we like to call it, be demonstrated with more completeness than

here, or men and women more opposite in views, in character, in opinions and lines of life and interest, jostle and press one another in the throng. Here the sinner and the saint lie side by side in a tranquillity as unbroken as where the grass is green over their contiguous graves; here the polemical disputants have signed a truce, the man of science and the theologian have ceased to wrangle, and rivals in politics and art find an amicable meeting-ground.

As one turns over the pages one wonders—but it is a question which, notwithstanding the interest of the subject, one prefers to confine to the realm of speculation—what would be the sentiments of some, at least, of the writers were they to light upon the record here preserved, and to read the history, traced by their own hands, of some episode in the past, half forgotten by themselves, and concerning which they have issued a decree, as imperious as that of Nebuchadnezzar himself, that it shall be no longer remembered by the world. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in his picture of ‘how they met themselves,’ has interpreted, as only a poet can, the sentiments we can imagine would be theirs should they chance upon this silent witness to the ineffectualness of their fiat. Or, possibly, they might take the matter more lightly, like the quondam lover who, re-reading in later life his youthful love-letters, docketed them for sole commentary with a note of exclamation. However that may be, in these pages we see the anomaly take place; the man of to-day meets with the man of yesterday, and, to epitomise the whole, Mr. Gladstone dates his letter from the Carlton Club.

Here, again, we come upon a series of letters, which we read with astonishment, looking through them a second time to make quite sure that our eyes have not deceived us. They place on record the deliberate arraignment of friend by friend. There is no mistake about it. In terms clear and distinct the impeachment is brought against the veracity, the honesty, almost, one might say, the honour, of the accused. As one reads them, one is reminded of Lord Grey’s reply to the indictment brought against him in the House of Lords by the Lord Derby of another generation: ‘In the attack that has been made upon me,’ he said, ‘a noble lord has constantly designated me as his noble friend. I trust that he will consider that he has now discharged the ultimate office of friendship, and will never again usurp the name.’ Lord Derby, we have been told by an eyewitness of the scene, acknowledged the announcement of the dissolution of life-

long ties with the coolness of absolute indifference, merely, from his seat opposite, lifting his hat with a bow. Nothing, added the same narrator in describing the incident, that he had witnessed on any stage had been so tragic. Perhaps to a looker-on the parting of friends to which the letters before us attest, might have had its degree and element of tragedy. But his sympathy would have been misplaced had he concluded the breach to be final. The date shifted, the years went by, and accuser and accused were standing once more before the world as friends. They had agreed together to bury their differences. *Hic jacet odium*; or would it be more accurate to say, *Hic jacet veritas*?

But to pass on to more particular mention of the ghosts that rise to meet us. Here, under the letter A, we find Sarah Austin returning thanks to her friend for some token of his recollection of 'one who is hardly to be reckoned among the living,' and expressing a hope that when the task she has undertaken—some literary enterprise, no doubt—is accomplished, she may 'rejoin that better half that has been taken from me.' It is a hope that, as we decipher the faded characters, we know to have been long since realised.

Side by side with her letter lies one from Matthew Arnold, in which he makes his acknowledgment on Christmas Day, 1872, for a present which, chancing to reach him on his birthday, had been such as 'almost to console him for growing old;' while on the next page Miss Berry complains of her health, and, following her, Robert Browning expresses generous appreciation of the work of a fellow-poet, and Dr. John Brown, writing as a stranger to a stranger, and evidently at the end of an argument, insists with national tenacity in infringing a woman's right and 'having the last word.'

Various enough! but all these have one 'note' at least in common. Miss Berry's health, we may be sure, troubles her no longer; Sarah Austin, whether the task of which she speaks was finished or incomplete, has had her aspiration fulfilled; Dr. John Brown's last word has, alas, been spoken, and Matthew Arnold fears no more the landmarks of age or time.

As we turn the page, however, all is changed, and we find ourselves, with an abrupt transition, brought face to face with the present. Here a baby notoriety confronts us, standing as the representative of life's promises, in contradistinction to its performances. If the writers with whom we have hitherto been concerned had all—to use an Irishman's description of his country—a history behind

them, she, to continue the quotation, may have a pedigree before her, but she still belongs to the possibilities. She tells us that she is 'looking forward awfully' to some promised pleasure. We are glad to hear it, hoping, as we pass on, that in one instance at least reality came up to expectation. And, for fear she should overhear the reply, we refrain from asking the verdict of her more experienced companions on the probabilities of the issue.

A letter with a special interest attaching to it comes next, for it is an author's own estimate of his work, and one also which, being altogether favourable, may be credited with a sincerity too often confined or trammelled by false shame or mock humility. He is content with his achievement, and we congratulate him as we pass on.

Alas! from this serene summit of literary satisfaction we are abruptly recalled to the contentions of the plains below. Here, in the medley, is a poet making mention of his political engagements, and a painter of the ideal giving his opinion—darkening counsel, as possibly some irreverent scoffer might term it—upon the actual and the real; whilst, looking a little further ahead, we meet with a practical politician and hard fighter, who takes his revenge for the trespass committed on his domain by being more visionary than the poet and more an idealist than the painter. So that, in the end, all is fair; the balance is rectified and the motley army marches on together to its common goal.

But to look on, or rather to look back, for in this, as in many cases, to go on is not to go forward; turning the page we pass to where the yellow quarto paper and faded ink, no less than the careful delicacy of the handwriting and the stately courtesy of the style, proclaim that we have quitted this age of hurry and stress to return to that in which men still had leisure. Which of us, one wonders—of us who are so busy in doing nothing, or, worse still, in doing to-day what will be undone to-morrow, we ourselves not impossibly lending a hand to the work of destruction—which of us would consider ourselves able to spare the time bestowed by Samuel Taylor Coleridge on an invitation to dinner, or on the following elaborate apology, filled with the morbid self-accusation characteristic of the man, which, occupying more than a page of closely written quarto, deals with a trifling oversight in the wording of an invitation given? As we read it, some among us may possibly congratulate ourselves that we have not the leisure to experience such deep compunction for a mistake of like dimensions. Yet listen to Coleridge's self-condemnation:



'I have [been],' he says, 'some half-dozen times, and if I say a score I shoot not far beyond the mark, on the point of writing to you. I cannot tell why; but so it is, that the mistake occasioned by Mrs. Gillman's forgetting that what it was impossible you should understand it was scarcely possible that you should not misunderstand (*videlicet*, that on Thursdays we drank Tea at our ordinary dinner hour on Mr. Irvine's and Basil Montague's account), has recurred to me with a frequency and an annoyance strangely disproportionate to the occasion. Of one thing I am certain, that I did not pay you so ill a compliment as to imagine that you would not think an evening passed with so interesting and highly gifted man as Irvine, and so acute and effective a Reasoner as my excellent Friend Basil Montague, a sufficient compensation for a bad dinner, or, rather, a bad apology for a dinner. But it sometimes happens that against our will a painful sensation, that takes one by surprize, hooks itself in, like the microscopic hairs of the caterpillar, that are said to occasion the Urticaria—and the pain I myself suffered, from the thought of the oversight striking you as virtual disrespect, *i.e.* the want of that respect which should have prevented it, made it easier for me to fancy this possible. I console myself, however, with the hope that a suspicion so particularly contrary to the truth, both in my own feelings and in those of my friends Mr. and Mrs. Gillman, will have passed through no head but my own, and perhaps I ought rather to apologize for so *lengthy* a preface to the enclosed card which Mrs. Gillman desires me to enclose, and if you are fond of dancing I can promise you more than one handsome Partner. . . . I am, dear Sir, with much esteem, your's truly,

S. T. COLERIDGE.'

There it stands—has stood for these sixty-seven years—the record of the tea which should have been a dinner, 'lit up,' to quote from a second letter from the same writer containing yet another invitation, 'lit up,' no doubt, in addition to the guests named, by some of the 'female intelligences' belonging to the circle. In this second letter we note that there is no ambiguity with regard to the nature of the entertainment offered; no loophole left for a further attack of conscience. It is, indeed, to be 'only a family dinner'—of that the invited guest is fairly warned, 'but still a dinner,' with which 'wine which has been received into the Binn as Falernian,' and some tolerable port besides, is to be drunk; and the further inducement is held out of the society



of Mr. Green, of Lincoln's Inn, 'whose Lectures on Life, Form, and Instinct' have attracted so much attention, and 'who is as good as he is tall, being six feet three inches high.' This last entertainment is evidently calculated to banish the recollection of the one over the inadequacy of which the mind of the host had been so painfully exercised. Yet we imagine that even a gourmand of to-day might deem his dinner well lost had he received an invitation to join the tea party at Highgate.

A half sheet of paper, also yellow with age, follows. It has neither beginning nor end, but the recipient has added its explanation in the significant comment, 'Written by Hartley Coleridge plenus Bacchi.' It opens with an apology for the writer's backwardness in fulfilling some literary engagement, then breaks out into doggerel rhyme :

One hour—one little hour, I spent with thee,  
Were I a child it had been long ago,  
But leaden hours at forty, how they flee—  
Like bullets—aye, that simile, you know,  
Pope has forestalled ; his juvenility  
Outran my wit, that ever was too slow.

And with these lines, like the burlesque below which we trace the skeleton of the tragedy, we take leave of the Coleridges ; the scene shifts from Highgate to Chelsea, the date from the twenties to the fifties, and the philosophic historian replaces the poetical philosopher.

Here, again, the letter begins with an apology for a trivial error, which, however, in this instance, has not been allowed to weigh too heavily on the more robust conscience of Thomas Carlyle. A letter has been opened by mistake, and then mislaid until it has become obsolete. But before he concludes, the note is struck which sets to the communication, slight as was the occasion which drew it forth, the sign and seal of the writer.

'I often think,' he writes, 'that my horse might carry me thither [to the house of his correspondent] any day, especially some Sunday, into a circle more *human* for me than most others now are. The world gets tragically solitary as we grow old in it. I [word illegible] in work here, though *lame* into the very heart.  
—Yours ever truly, T. CARLYLE.'

Who that possessed his gift of tragic expression could have avoided believing in the tragedy of his life ? It would be a

curious speculation to analyse how far the opinions of men are correlative to their powers of expressing them, and in how many cases it is possible that the power of expression was the mould in which the opinion or sentiment expressed was cast.

A note follows, written in a lighter vein. It is a reply to an eminent photographer, whose petition for a sitting, though favourably received, cannot at once be granted.

‘But,’ he adds encouragingly, ‘there will another day arrive (other days with sun in them’—strange confession of faith from Thomas Carlyle!—‘and a studio nearer hand) and you *shall* have a stroke at my face, if you persist in wishing it. Depend upon that; and let us (as the Latins say) “hasten slowly.”—Yours always truly,  
T. CARLYLE.’

And last of all comes one of which, even as we glance at it, the writing of the amanuensis, the trembling characters of the autograph affixed, tell their own mournful story. It is only the answer to an invitation to dinner, yet as we read it we fancy we hear the tolling of the bell which announces that the funeral is at hand. He wishes he could come, ‘but, alas, alas, I am in so weak a way, bodily and spiritually, I must in prudence answer that I cannot.’ And the tremulous, shaken signature bears melancholy witness to the necessity of the caution.

And so the letter C comes to an end, and Chelsea and Highgate pass out of sight, making way for one who has disarmed criticism by claiming for himself, what others, perhaps, would have been reluctant to give him, the title of the poetaster—‘the ink-spillingest of friends,’ thus he signs his name across the blotted page, ‘F. H. Doyle,’ adding with characteristic readiness the impromptu verse:

Compared with mighty Shakespeare, writers all  
In this thin age are miserably small,  
Still, what Pope said he wanted, I have got,  
‘The greatest art of all—the art to blot.’

On the opposite page another Doyle is also represented by a specimen of his art. It was only a day or two ago that it was our fortune to be present at a discussion on the distinguishing characteristics of angels and fairies, the disputants being a child and a priest. Had the sketch now before us been produced in court, the question would have been a closed one. No impartial witness, looking at the angel portrayed by Richard Doyle, as it

listens to three babies at their prayers, could entertain a doubt (granted—and who could question it?—that the artist had obtained a sitting from his celestial model) that both the angels and the fairies belong to one and the same race.

It is well that we have had this gay and graceful interlude—the genial versifier and the gentle painter—for there follows a letter which, in its dreary bitterness, is not surpassed in sadness by any in the collection.

The world is impatient of a sorrow that grows old. Like the Lord Chamberlain, it claims the right to regulate the period of mourning, to set its limits and prescribe its fashion and degree; and when a grief, like the crape which symbolises it, begins to grow rusty, it is imperative in its demand that it shall be put off. Only to its first favourites, and to few indeed of these, does it permit the luxury of a life-long sorrow.

For poor George Darley, author of ‘*Sylvia*,’ now half-forgotten, true poet as he was, we instinctively divine that it had small mercy. There was nothing interesting or picturesque—there was, on the contrary, something even grotesque—in the infirmity by which he was weighed down. But whether it would have been granted to him or not, it is probable that he laid little claim to sympathy, as he sat in hopeless patience under the shadow of his doom; rather we can imagine that he would have shrunk from it with the sensitive recoil of a morbid and overstrained temperament, and that the letter which follows, in its apparent contradiction to our anticipation, is, likely enough, only the result of one of those impulses, exceptional indeed but not uncommon, which drive the most silent of mourners from time to time to open their grief.

After thanking his correspondent for some sign that he was not unremembered, he proceeds:

‘So shady is my path along the “cool, sequestered vale of life,” that ’twould not be wonderful if friends on the sunny side of the hedge lost sight of me altogether. I am glad to find myself as little forgotten as forgetful of them. Tho’ the gag which maternal Nature put into my mouth makes me appear a misanthrope, there is nothing I should less like to be, except a philanthropist. But what pleasure can sociality afford anyone possessed with a dumb, or half-dumb, devil who teareth him within, and renders his effort at conversation a convulsion risible and lamentable together? If, however, you can tolerate (like a very

few friends) all that makes such an imbroglio of the vernacular, I shall be as happy to see you as any in the parenthesis.'

One is glad to perceive, as the letter proceeds, that 'maternal Nature' had not been so altogether unmindful of the law of compensation as not, with the disease, to provide, if not a remedy at least a palliative; and that the man forgets himself in the poet as he enters with eager interest into the discussion as to whether or not it is justifiable to correct, with the experience of riper years, the poems of youth. Darley is emphatically of opinion that it is.

'True inspiration,' he says, 'burns always as long, often as bright, as the other intellectual faculties. . . . Yes, judgment improves with years—so does imagination, till both decline synchronously and sympathetically,' proceeding to cite Shakespeare and Milton in support of his theory. 'But perhaps,' he adds in conclusion, 'my verdict may be prejudiced, as *minimum componere maximis*, I could now sit down with all my boyish enthusiasm, purified somewhat, not the least diluted, to write extravaganzas like "Sylvia"—if the world were not too wise to read them.—Ever your's, as of old,

GEORGE DARLEY.'

To this letter the answer has been preserved. Here it is :

'Your letter,' his correspondent writes, 'is both gratifying and melancholy, and suggests many more reflections than I shall trouble you with. The infirmity which you speak of must be a sad trial to any man, and doubly sad to you, who have so much to express and—with this one exception—so much of the faculties of language and expression. But there is another point of view in which it may be regarded and be assured that, so far as the moral mind is concerned, and the objects which you would value most, the opposite extreme—of a peculiar aptitude for society—is a severer trial still. I have observed the consequences of such an aptitude in persons whom I have known, and having seen what success in society has done to them, I have often thought that Nature would have been more truly kind had she put an impediment in their way. You, if you have great trials, have great resources and great strength.'

We have no means of knowing whether, as man and as artist, George Darley accepted the consolation offered, but few will refuse to admit the truth upon which it is founded, as, looking round

at the melancholy spectacle of the wrecks which strew the shores of the dead sea which is called society, they acknowledge that in art as in religion the uncompromising truth still holds good and that no man can serve two masters.

We are sorry, for our part, both for Darley's sake and for its own, that the world had grown too wise for him to amuse it. It would have forgiven him his melancholy if he could have made it laugh. His words, too, revive a misgiving by which most of us have been visited at times—a suspicion that we are loath to admit—that our present generation is not quite so gay as those by which it was preceded, that people nowadays are inclined to refuse to laugh till it has been clearly demonstrated to them that the joke is one of which they need not be ashamed (by which time it is likely enough that the occasion for mirth is gone by), and that when they do laugh they are apt to find themselves listening to their laughter, and observing with satisfaction that they have not, after all, forgotten how to be amused. It is a state of things against which, if our fears are well founded, it is useless to rebel; to be merry when we are sad, or at least serious, to laugh at the jests which have ceased to amuse us, is worse tenfold than the absence of any merriment at all. We had better resign ourselves with as good a grace as we may to be grave, only let us be honest and say that we do so, not because we like it, or because we have got what is better worth having than laughter, but because we must, because the world has grown too old and too reasonable to be merry, and because Folly, like the leisure of which we were speaking just now, and like other pleasant things of which we have not spoken, has met with such discouragement at its hands that she has taken it at its word and left it to get on as best it can without her.

And so George Darley, too, passes out of sight and another poet takes his place; a poet, or at least a poetical critic as he comes before us here, though it is not as such that the world chiefly remembers Frederick Faber.

Dating from Balliol College, he draws attention to an article of his own in an Oxford magazine, proceeding to pass judgment with youthful vehemence upon the 'meretriciously ornate' poets of the day. It was possibly characteristic of the future founder of the English Oratory that he should have acted on the precisely opposite principle to those who 'damn the sins they have no mind to.' Otherwise, considering the matter in the light of his later religious verse, we are surely justified in concluding that the severity

which dictated the stern denunciation of the particular literary sin in question had become modified in his later years! It is Wordsworth who, at this period of his career, commands his allegiance, as he speaks of 'the proudest day of my life—that which I spent with William Wordsworth, the foremost man of all this age, at Rydal Mount.' But in the eagerness and zeal with which, further on, he proceeds to combat and refute a 'great and fearful heresy,' though the said heresy is only concerned with the person and doctrines of Pythagoras, whom his correspondent is accused of having stigmatised as the great charlatan of antiquity, we seem to see foreshadowed the future ecclesiastic.

Not inappropriately and as if blind chance had for once been open-eyed, his letter is followed closely by another, the writer of which would, we feel sure, consider herself honoured by the near neighbourhood of the eminent Churchman.

Here we read of a friendship not broken but renewed, and renewed, moreover, with something of the ardour which commonly, alas, belongs rather to the earlier stages of life's relationships than to those which succeed them. But a past friendship revived has this advantage—perhaps an unfair one—both over those which, continuing unbroken through a long term of years, have too often suffered the gradual decay of age, and over those which are altogether new—that it unites in itself to a great extent the most attractive features of each, combining the charm of freshness and unexpectedness with that other charm, not less necessary to a perfect friendship, made up of old association, common memories, and the mellowing power of time. To meet once more a friend from whom we have been separated, no matter from what cause, for many years is an experiment which few, perhaps, would have the courage or the faith to try, echoing rather Walter Savage Landor's pathetic protest:

No, my lost friend of many years,

No, it must never be.

Much rests with you which still endears,

Alas; but what with me?

It is, in fact, a case of double or quits; the past, the tender and reverent associations which cling round an undisturbed grave, being the stakes which are risked. But when the game has been played and won, no doubt the winnings are high. In the present instance the venture appears to have been eminently successful.



One more letter, and this also from a woman—one of the greatest singers that the century has known—and this paper must close. We have heard Carlyle on growing old; he found, he tells us, the world getting ‘tragically solitary.’ Let us listen to what the woman and the artist has to say on the same subject.

‘We old people are getting old,’ writes Madame Jenny Lind Goldschmidt in May 1883, ‘*I* rather tired of life. I have lived through twenty lives, and my inner history is so rich, that I sit and read backwards into it, until I fancy I am in the midst of it! Scarcely a day passes when I do not receive tokens and remembrances of “Auld Lang Syne.” What a thing true art is; how it has held me up through life and carried me gently over its abysses. Yes, life becomes more and more wonderful. I often think of the sunsets I saw at Havannah—the half of the sky was golden long after the sun was set! So I find life; so much is golden if we only see it, and the sufferings turn into gold too. *You*, like others, have had your share. May we find our way to the Throne of Grace, and all will be well.

‘Can I only become the last chorister in the choir of heaven, I shall rejoice with holiest joy!’

I. A. TAYLOR.

## *A Theory.*

**W**HY do violins shudder so,  
 When across them is drawn the bow,  
 Sob for anguish and wild despair?  
 Human souls are imprisoned there.

Souls are shut in the violins,  
 They are the souls of Philistines;  
 But the Philistines, row on row,  
 Soulless sit and they do not know.

But they brandish their eye-glasses,  
 Stare at each other's evening dress,  
 Scrutinise form or brilliant hue,  
 Say: 'Is it rouge or is it true?

'Some one was flat a semitone,  
 And how stout the soprano's grown!  
 Isn't the bass a dear? and oh,  
 Do look at Mrs. So-and-so!'

Still the musicians play serene,  
 As though Philistines had not been,  
 But their souls in the violins  
 Mourn on bitterly for their sins,

Call them wildly and call in pain,  
 Call them with longing deep and vain,  
 And with infinite tenderness,  
 Since they can give them no redress.

Since not one of them is aware,  
Here is he and his soul is *there*,  
In the music's divinest chord,  
Making melody to the Lord.

So how often in life and art  
Soul and body must dwell apart—  
Great is the Master's soul, no doubt—  
Twenty Philistines go without.

Are we body or are we soul?  
Little matter upon the whole.  
Human soul in the violin,  
Save me at last, a Philistine!

MAY KENDALL.

## *Will Simpson's Funeral.*

### AN EPISODE.

#### I.

SANDY ANDERSON, the bell-ringer of the parish church, stood at the church door and surveyed the surrounding country. It was already the hour at which service should have commenced. The tinkle of the Free Church bell had died away on the breeze, the clock had struck, and yet Sandy had not rung the final summons which would bring into church the groups of men chattering idly in the porch, and a few stray members of the flock now struggling up the steep ascent known as Kirk Hill.

'She's late the day,' muttered Sandy to himself. He shaded his eyes with his hand, and at last descried far down the western road a slim girlish figure, that was hurrying forward in breathless haste. Sandy watched her till she had passed the corner by the Haugh Farm, then he mounted the belfry steps and swung out with irregular jerks the summons—Be quick, be quick, be quick!

In response, the men who stood in the porch prepared themselves to enter the kirk. They stopped their chattering, a look of preternatural solemnity settled down on their features, each one of them produced a copper coin and dropped it with a resounding clink into the plate at the door; then they tramped inside, and settled themselves with some commotion in their various pews. Sandy dropped the bell-rope, and scuffled down the wooden steps. Outside the porch four men still lingered, and up the Kirk Hill came nearer and nearer the figure Sandy had seen from afar.

'Hae ye heard the news, Sandy?' asked one of the men.

'I dinna ken,' said Sandy cautiously.

'Will Simpson's a corp.'

'Man, is he *that*?'

'Ay, an' his mither's fair dementit. "Gin my Will's ta'en awa'," says she, "God isna a God o' love,"'

'Eh, it's hard on her, puir cratur!'

'Ay, is't.'

They all shook their heads lugubriously, but allowed a faint smile to lighten the gloom of their faces as the last comer, Miss Hereford, passed them with a nod of welcome. She entered the church, and they followed. The inner doors were closed; and presently the cheerful strains of 'Martyrdom' floated out upon the air, startling some mavis into glorious song.

Miss Hereford was the newly elected teacher of the Board School, opened a year before for the quarriers' children. Very little was known about her except that she came from the South—some said from London! The salary attached to the Quarry School was small, and there was difficulty in finding a teacher. Of the few applicants, Miss Hereford held such superior certificates, that the Board could not do otherwise than elect her. This was her third appearance in church. She was seated in the Manse pew, a prominent position, and excited more interest among the congregation than she had any idea of. Kind-hearted farmers' wives, looking at her slender figure and thin face, thought of their own buxom daughters, and pitied her. The men stared at her with a persistency of which she and they were unconscious, and recognised in her a creature very different from the women they were accustomed to deal with. The whole congregation was a little suspicious of her—she came from the South.

On her first appearance in church she had been observed to kneel during the prayers—right down on her knees, on the bare boards! Did this savour of Popery? Sandy Anderson, who had elected himself her defender in chief, said, 'Na, na. She's a braw bit lassie. Gin *she* disna mind the boards, we'll no say a word.'

On the next Sabbath it was further discovered that whereas the rest of the worshippers precipitated themselves from their pews the very moment the Benediction had been pronounced, and left the church rapidly and noisily, Miss Hereford knelt down and remained kneeling for quite two minutes. The superintendent of the Sabbath School, who had thought of asking her to take a class, hesitated. Sandy looked anxious.

With the third Sabbath a climax was reached. At the close of an impressive sermon on the words 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,' solemn reference was made to 'a recent loss sus-

tained by some who have neither part nor lot with us ;' an expression that roused Miss Hereford's wonder. Then the first three verses of the 53rd Paraphrase were given out.

The school teacher loved singing, and had a sweet, clear voice. She had heard the remarks made by the men at the church door ; they had filled her with an irrepressible sadness, which had deepened during the sermon. Now she raised her voice and sang out almost with a smile—

Take comfort, Christians, when your friends  
In Jesus fall asleep,

but at the word Jesus she bent her head down very low. The action was seen by everyone. Her ringing voice had attracted to her some eyes that would not otherwise have been turned in her direction. Horrified glances were exchanged by a few, disapproval was written large in the faces of many. Sandy's expression of dismay would have been ludicrous but for its intensity. He looked at his book ; the Name recurred in the third verse. He watched the singer with breathless anxiety ; again her head was bent reverently but unmistakably down. Sandy's jaw dropped ; he was scarcely conscious of the Benediction and subsequent emptying of the church. When Miss Hereford came out, he was standing dejectedly in the porch.

'Good day, Sandy,' said she, holding out her hand in greeting. 'I was nearly too late this morning, was I not ?'

He made no answer, but shifted the collection plate to and fro on its stand.

'Why,' cried Miss Hereford, noticing the movement, 'you don't mean to say that that money has been there all through the service ! Do you always leave it there ? Does it never get stolen ?'

'Ay, it's lifted whiles.'

A deacon came out, and carried the collection away into safety. Then Miss Hereford, recovering from her astonishment, remembered a determination she had made on her knees at the close of the service.

'Sandy,' she said, 'there are one or two things I want to ask you about. Are you going straight home ? because, if so, I will wait for you at the foot of the hill.'

He signified his acquiescence in this arrangement by a nod, and disappeared abruptly within the building.

The young lady walked slowly down the hill, pausing at in-



tervals to draw deep breaths of the heather-scented air. The blue sky, the golden cornfields, the purple heather, the droning hum of the bee, the liquid trill of the thrush, were sights and sounds that thrilled her. At the foot of the hill she seated herself on a huge stone that had fallen from the dyke. She plucked some sprays of heather, and bound them to one another with a strip of grass. Suddenly her mind reverted to the conversation of the men at the church porch. Tears filled her eyes and blotted out the landscape.

"Gin my Will's ta'en awa', God isna a God o' love," she repeated. 'Oh, that poor woman, that poor woman; how I wish I could comfort her!'

Presently Sandy overtook her, and together they walked up the western road which led to their respective homes.

'Sandy,' she said, 'I overheard what you and those other men were saying at the church door this morning. You were talking about some woman who has lost her son. Who is it?'

'Kirsty Simpson, Jeemes Simpson's wife.'

'Where does she live?'

'At Braehead Croft, yonder.' He pointed in the direction of a thickly wooded hill.

'Is it the other side of the hill?'

'Ay.'

'How can I get there?'

He looked at her curiously. What could *she* want at Kirsty Simpson's?

'Ye can gang by the Barrow Road, but it's nigh upo' five mile; or ye can gang up the Quarry Road and past Donald Stewart's farm.'

'Is that shorter?'

'Ay; it's but three mile an' a bit.'

'Thank you; then of course I will go by the Quarry Road. Sandy, who did the clergyman mean when he spoke of "some who have neither part nor lot with us"?''

'I'se warrant he meant Jeemes Simpson.'

'What has Jeemes Simpson done?'

'He's lifted his lines.'

'I don't understand,' she said; 'is that a very wicked thing to do?'

Sandy stared at her. Here was unheard-of ignorance! Was it possible that she did not appreciate the wickedness of back-sliding from Church ordinances? His astonished silence lasted so

long, that Miss Hereford concluded Jeemes Simpson's crime must be too awful to mention.

They had by this time reached a place where the road forked. Sandy's farmsteading lay in one direction, Miss Hereford's school-house in another.

'Well, good-bye, Sandy,' said she. 'I will try to be in good time next Sunday.'

Sandy stood still. A tremendous desire possessed him to speak some words on which he had been meditating ever since the singing of the Paraphrase. It seemed impossible to utter them, and yet they *must* be uttered.

'What for did ye douk your heid?' he asked.

He might as well have spoken Greek. His auditor knew but few Scotch words. 'Douk' she had never heard, and being unconscious of the impropriety with which she had behaved she attached no significance to 'heid.' She smiled up at him a wondering interrogation; and Sandy, growing suddenly abashed at his own daring, hurried off up the side road and left her.

## II.

AN epidemic of measles had broken out in the Quarry Cottages. Lest it should spread further, the authorities ordered the school to be closed for a few days; and in consequence Miss Hereford was free to carry out her charitable intentions.

After noon on Monday, she betook herself to the Quarry Road, and followed it to Donald Stewart's farm, where it ended abruptly; a beaten track led her on to the moor beyond. Here there was no track visible, but she knew in which direction Braehead Croft lay, and tramped confidently through the heather.

She was awed by the intense stillness through which she passed. From far distant fields the sound of the reapers' voices was carried up to her on the air; but there was no sound near her except once, when she startled a covey of grouse, and was herself more scared than they as they whirled up out of the heather at her feet. It took her a long time to cover the 'three mile an' a bit.' She was not used to walking over peat moss, and through woods where the ground was slippery with pine needles. At last she came in sight of Braehead Croft, lying a hundred yards below her at the foot of a steep incline. The place looked deserted, desolate; there was absolutely not one

sign of life about it. Two or three acres of ground had been cleared, and a crop of oats raised. It was cut and stood in stooks; Miss Hereford was not experienced enough to note how short the straw was, and how light the grain.

The back of the cottage was toward her; she passed round to the front of it. Absolute stillness prevailed. She tapped at the wooden door, and received no answer. As it was unfastened, she pushed it open and went in. There were the regulation two rooms, 'butt and ben,' divided by a narrow passage. The door to the right was ajar. She stepped across the threshold and stood on the stone floor of the kitchen. A peat fire smouldered on the hearth, and the reek filled the room—a dark, wretched little room, with a box-bed in the wall, a dresser, a broken table, and a couple of benches. The place was silent—empty. She turned away from it and walked along the passage. The other door was closed. She had almost turned the handle when a sudden sensation of fear stole over her; if she opened that door, *what would she see?* She made her way quickly out of the cottage; then her ear caught the sound of a sob. She followed the sound. Behind the cottage was a dilapidated wooden shed. In the further end of it oats were stacked; in front, leaning against straw, sat a woman and a lad. They seemed to have dropped down there from sheer fatigue. The lad's eyes were closed; he breathed with difficulty. The woman sat and looked at him. It was a picture of hopeless despair. It was she who now and again drew a long sobbing breath, but there were no tears in her eyes.

Miss Hereford glanced at the lad, and her face lightened; she recognised in him the carrier who drove past the school-house every week.

'Why, Jake,' she said gently, 'are you ill?'

He opened his eyes and looked at her; he made an effort to raise himself, and failed.

'It's the school teacher, mither,' he said.

'Ay, he's ill,' said the woman, answering for him. 'My Jake's ill. Oh, God! it's hard to bear! First Will, and then Jake.'

She sobbed again; she never moved her eyes from his face.

Miss Hereford knelt down beside him, gently pushed back the hair from his forehead, and wiped his brow with her handkerchief.

'Ought he to be here?' she asked anxiously. 'Shall we try to get him to his bed?'

'I dinna ken. He thinks he's better here. The reek i' the room gars him cough, an' the cough's sair upon him.'

'I think I could make him more comfortable,' said the girl. She shifted the straw so as to give him more support. His heavy eyelids closed; he was already half asleep. His mother had by this time dragged herself to her feet.

'Eh, you're kind!' she said wonderingly, as though kindness were rarely met with. 'He'll bide there; he'll rest there. He isna' fit for work.'

'Have you and he been trying to work?'

'Ay. The neebors ha' been kind til's. They cuttit the oats afore Will was ta'en. But the stooks maun be led in. Jake an' I tried to lift them.'

'Does your husband not help you?' Miss Hereford was almost afraid to allude to Jeemes after Sandy's remark.

'He hasna been i' the place sin Will gaed awa'. Maybe Jeemes *isna* all he should be.' Thus gently did she speak of one who was the terror of the neighbourhood.

'Jake is very much changed since I last saw him.'

'Ay, is he. He was liftin' Will o' Saturday, an' he bled frae the lungs.'

'Do you mean he broke a blood-vessel?'

'Ay: I ken it's the sign o' his death. Will began that way.'

'But oh!' cried Miss Hereford, wringing her hands, 'if that happened on Saturday you should not have let him touch these heavy weights to-day.'

'I ken that fine,' said Kirsty with a breaking voice. 'But, ye see, grief has ta'en a' my strength; an' when Jake saw me strugglin' wi' them stooks, naething could keep him frae helpin' me.'

'Has the doctor seen him?'

'He was here o' Saturday. He gied him a mixture. It's a red mixture, Will's was white; maybe this'll do mair guid. I canna work mair. I'll gang to my bairn. Will ye come too?'

Instinctively Miss Hereford knew that this invitation was intended as a compliment. She followed.

They went from the barn into the cottage, turned to the left hand, and entered the closed room. How strange, how solemn, how awful it was, tenanted by Death! The walls had been white-washed, the stone flags were white, the table before the window was covered with a white sheet. The bed was draped with white, and so was the open coffin resting upon it. The one dark object in the room was the coffin lid, propped up against the wall. The two women stood silently beside the bed, and as they stood there

Kirsty's frame was shaken by those terrible shuddering sobs. When she looked upon the dead man, and thought of the misery of the living woman, tears rose in the school teacher's eyes, and fell. Kirsty saw them.

'Ay,' she said, in an indescribably desolate tone, 'you can greet. You who never had a bairn to love and lose. I hae nae tears. He's my Will, my first child, my guid bairn, an' the Lord's ta'en him. They may weel say 'at His ways are past findin' oot. I canna find them oot. Why did He gie me my bairn, an' a mither's heart to love him, an' then tak' him awa'? Why did He wait till my heart had grown so close round Will's it couldna let him go, before He took him? The neebors say 'at I loved the lad ow'r weel. The missionar' tell't me I worshipped the creetur mair nor the Creator. Oh, Will, my bonnie laddie, you're deid there because I loved ye ow'r muckle. The Lord gave ye to me an' bade me love ye, an' I did it, an' you're deid.' Her voice was choked with sobs.

It was an occasion to have 'improved,' no doubt. A time to have administered words of correction and instruction. Miss Hereford had not one to say. In the presence of such grief she was dumb. She did what her heart prompted, flung her arms round the woman's neck, drew down the weary head till it rested on her shoulder, and kissed her again and again.

'A' the years I've lived,' said Kirsty, with a long-drawn sigh of weariness and content, 'never a lady touched me so before.'

'I'll tell ye ae thing,' she said, after a pause. 'I didna think to tell it to a livin' soul but Jake, but I'm moved to tell it to ye. Last nicht I stayed here by my Will. Jake sleeps ben, an' the ither bairns are a' hired oot for the hairst. I was sittin' here, an' I looked upon my bairn, an' I prayed: "Lord, Ye ken weel I'm a guid woman, an' a' my life lang Ye've sent me trouble—let me die now, oh Lord!" Ye see my heart was that sair wi' sorrow I'd fair forgotten Jake, an' thocht only 'at I couldna live withoot my Will. An' I fell asleep an' dreem't. I was standin' by a dark river, as it might be the Barrow flowin' at the fit o' the brae. An' I saw across the river twa men standin'. Then it cam' upon me 'at it was the River o' Death, an' yonder side was the Land o' Promise. An' ane o' the men was my Will. I couldna see the face o' the ither, but I thocht it was the Lord Jesus. An' I ca'd oot to Will, "Help me across, my bairn," but he never moved. An' right oot frae their feet cam' a bar o' golden light, like the sun shinin' on dark waters. I pit oot my feet to gang

across on it, but a great wind arose an' ruffled the water, an' I couldna see the licht, an' I was feart. Then I heard a voice like the sound o' a trumpit, "Thou art weighed i' the balance an' art found wantin'!" An' I woke, an' the hair rose up on my heid, for I thocht I saw Will's lips move. I couldna bide here langer. I went ben to Jake, an' wakened him, an' tell 't him a'. "Oh, Jake," I said, "I canna be ane o' the Elec', for I hae loved my bairns ow'r weel." An' it cam' ow'r me like a flash o' licht, 'at the man I thocht was the Lord Jesus had Jake's face. Then I knew my twa lads would stan' i' the Land o' Promise, an' leave me *this* side o' the River.'

That night, as Jake and his mother rested together ben the house, Jake said: 'Mither, div ye think God's angels 'll be onywise like the school teacher? Did ye see how she knelt down by me i' the shed, an' never heedit her claes?'

'Ay, Jake, I did that,' said Kirsty, and added with a wondering smile hidden by the darkness, 'an' she kissed *me*!'

### III.

EARLY on Wednesday morning Miss Hereford was astir. She took a basket with her, walked to the Barrow, and was ferried across the river. Half an hour's walk brought her to Barrow Glen. The house was empty, for the proprietor lived abroad; but the large gardens and conservatories were filled with fruit and flowers cultivated for the southern markets. When Miss Hereford returned, her basket held pure white roses, feathery sprays of deutzia, and tender green ferns.

On her way home she encountered Sandy.

'What time is the funèral to-day, Sandy?'

He rummaged in his pocket and produced a sheet of paper with a startling black border, whereon it was set forth that James and John Simpson, father and brother of the deceased, requested the favour of your presence at the funeral of William Simpson; friends to assemble at Braehead Croft 2 P.M., or at the Barrow Churchyard 3.30 P.M.

'Then they will pass the school-house about three o'clock?'

'It'll be a' that. Will Simpson's a gey heavy weicht, and the road's rough.'

'Sandy, do you think you could get me some coarse wire?'

In answer to his astonished look, she opened her basket and explained that the contents were to go on the coffin.



'Eh, but they're bonnie,' said Sandy. 'We dinna aften see the like o' they. Gang ye hame, an' I'se get ye the weer.'

It was long after three when the funeral procession came past the school-house. Six men carried the coffin, and about a hundred others followed. At the school-house gate they came to a standstill. There stood Miss Hereford bearing an exquisite cross of white flowers.

'Do you think,' she said, 'you could stoop a little, so that I may place this on the coffin?'

They looked at the cross, and all that they had ever heard of Popery and Jesuitry rose up in their minds. They looked at the school teacher, and Popery and Jesuitry were alike forgotten. Involuntarily the bearers stooped, and Miss Hereford laid her beautiful cross on the coffin lid.

Then she stepped back. A hand touched her arm; a tall gaunt lad, with a thin white face and staring eyes, addressed her.

'Will ye mak' one o' they for me?'

'Yes, Jake, I will,' said the school teacher, and burst into tears.

The procession moved on.

Sandy Anderson, and Robert Ross the grave-digger, waited in the churchyard.

'They're lang o' comin', Rob.'

'Ay, are they; I didna expec' 'at they wad be here till nigh upon four. The road's bad, ye ken, an' Will hadna wasted muckle.'

'Its sair upon Kirsty.'

'Ay. But we maunna say a word agen the dealin's o' Providence. Ye ken we're but worms, after a'!'

'There they come,' cried Sandy. 'Man, it's a gran' funeral! There'll be nigh upon a hunnert there. They maun ha' closed a' the three quarries. Eh, but it's a respectable funeral! Will woud ha' been gratifeed gin he could ha' seen't.'

The procession drew nearer.

'Yon's Jake, puir lad,' said Sandy. 'He'll be the neist, Rob. Isna he thin?'

'Ay. Jake'll be easy carried.'

'Div ye see Jeemes? The scoondrel! He hasna been sae nigh the kirk for years, I'se warrant.'

The coffin was now so close to them that its decoration could be plainly seen.

'Sandy,' said Rob, in an awed whisper, 'yon's a cross!'

Sandy was horror-struck.

'I thoct she wantit the weer for a wreath,' he said aghast.

'Ye kenn't it wad be there? Wha did it? The school teacher?'

'Ay, just her.'

'I wunner at ye, Sandy. Tae coontenance a Popish thing like yon!'

'Na, na. She didna mean ony harm,' said Sandy desperately. 'She's frae the Sooth, ye ken; an' they hae gey queer ways i' Lunnon.'

'It's a disgrace to the parish. It shallna be suffered!'

The bearers approached, and Rob made a movement forward as though to snatch the Popish emblem from the coffin. Sandy seized his arm.

'Man,' he cried, with a sudden flash of inspiration, 'ye'll no deny 'at the Lord 'Himsel' tell't us to carry the cross in oor lives! I canna think He'll be fashed gin we let it bide on oor graves.'

And the cross remained.

ANNIE THOMPSON.

## *Dust.*

SOME of the most enchanting phenomena in nature are dependent for their very existence upon singularly unimportant things; and some phenomena that in one form or another daily attract our attention are produced by startlingly overlooked material. What is the agent that magically transforms the leaden heavens into the gorgeous afterglow of autumn, when the varied and evanescent colours chase each other in fantastic brilliancy? What is the source of the beautiful, brilliant, and varied colouring of the waters of the Mediterranean, or of the most extraordinary brilliant blue of the crystal waters of the tarns in the Cordilleras? What produces the awe-inspiring deep blue of the zenith in a clear summer evening, when the eye tries to reach the absolute? Whence come the gentle refreshing rain, the biting sleet, the stupefying fog, the chilling mist, the virgin snow, the glimmering haze, or the pelting hail? What raises water to the state of ebullition in the process of heat application for boiling? What is the source of much of the wound putrefaction, and the generation and spread of sickness and disease? What, in fact, is one of the most marvellous agents in producing beauty for the eye's gratification, refreshment to the arid soil, sickness and death to the frame of man and beast? That agent is *dust*.

And yet no significance is given to dust unless it appears in large and troublesome quantities. It requires the persistent annoyance of dust-clouds to excite any attention. Dust, however, demands to be noticed, even when not in that collected, irritating motion known in Scotland as *stour*. The dust-particles floating in the atmosphere or suspended in the water have a most important influence upon the imagination, as well as upon the comfort of man. Though so small that a microscope magnifying 1,600 diameters is required to discern them, they at times sorely tax the patience of the tidy housekeeper and the skill of the anxious surgeon. An æsthetic eye is charmed with their gorgeous

transformation effects; yet some are more real emissaries of evil than poet or painter ever conceived.

Until the famous discovery made by Mr. John Aitken, of Falkirk, a few years ago, no one could reasonably account for the existence of rain. It was said by physicists that cloud-particles were attracted by the law of gravitation under certain conditions of temperature and pressure. But this famous experimentalist and observer found out that without dust there could be no rain; there would be nothing but continuous dew. Our bodies and roads would be always wet. There would be no need for umbrellas, and the housekeeper's temper would be sorely tried with the dripping walls.

A very easy experiment will show that where there is no dust there can be no fog. If common air be driven through a filter of cotton-wool into an exhausted glass receiver, the vessel contains pure air without dust, the dust having been seized by the cotton-wool. If a vessel containing common air be placed beside it, the eye is unable to detect any difference in the contents of the vessels, so very fine and invisible is the dust. If both vessels be connected with a boiler by means of pipes, and steam be passed into both, the observer will be astonished at the contrast presented. In the vessel containing common air the steam will be seen, as soon as it enters, rising in a close white cloud; then a beautiful foggy mass will fill the vessel, so dense that it cannot be seen through. On the other hand, in the vessel containing the filtered, dustless air the steam is not seen at all; though the eye be strained, no particles of moisture are discernible; there is no cloudiness whatever. In the one case, where there was the ordinary air impregnated with invisible dust, fog at once appeared; whereas in the other case, the absence of the dust prevented the water-vapour from condensing into fog. Invisible dust, then, is required in the air for the production of fog, cloud, mist, snow, sleet, hail, haze, and rain, according to the temperature and pressure of the air.

The old theory of particles of water-vapour combining with each other to form a cloud-particle is now exploded. Dust is required as a free-surface on which the vapour-particles will condense. The fine particles of dust in the air attract the vapour-particles and form fog-particles. When there is abundance of dust in the air, and little water-vapour present, there is an over proportion of dust-particles; and the fog-particles are, in consequence, closely packed, but light in form and small in size,

taking the more flimsy appearance of fog. But if the dust-particles are fewer in proportion to the number of molecules of water-vapour, each particle soon gets weighted, becomes visible, and falls in mist or rain.

This can be shown by experiment. Let a jet of steam be passed into a glass receiver containing common air, and it will be soon filled with dense fog. Shut off the steam, and allow the fog to settle. The air again becomes clear. Admit more steam, and the water-particles will seize hold of the dust-particles that previously escaped. Fog will be formed, but it will not be so dense. Again, shut off the steam, and allow the fog to settle and the air to clear. Then admit some steam, and very likely the condensed vapour will fall as rain. If the experiment be often enough repeated, rain instead of fog will be formed, because there are comparatively few solid particles on which the moisture can condense. When, then, dust is present in large quantities, the condensed vapour produces a fog; there are so many particles of dust to which the vapour can adhere that each can only get a very small share—so small, in fact, that the weight of the dust is scarcely affected by the addition of the vapour—and the fog formed remains for a time suspended in the air, too light to fall to the ground. But when the number of dust-particles is fewer, each particle can take hold of a greater space of the water-vapour, and mist-particles or even rain-particles will be formed.

This principle that every fog-particle has embosomed in it an invisible dust-particle led Mr. Aitken to one of the most startling discoveries of our day—the enumeration of the dust-particles of the air. Thirty years ago M. Pasteur succeeded in counting the organic particles in the air; these are comparatively few, whereas the number of inorganic particles is legion. Dr. Koch, Dr. Percy Frankland and others have devoted considerable attention to the enumeration of the micro-organisms in the air, and Mr. A. Wynter Blyth, the public analyst in London, has done good service in counting the micro-organisms in the different kinds of water in the vicinity. Marvellous as are the results, still the process was comparatively easy. By generating the colonies in a prepared gelatine, the number of microbes can be easily ascertained.

But to attempt to count the inorganic dust seemed almost equal in audacity to the scaling of the heavens. The numbering of the dust of the air, like the numbering of the hairs of the head, was considered as one of the prerogatives of the Deity. Yet Mr. Aitken has counted the 'gay motes that people the sun-

beams.' Though he could not enlarge the particles by a nutritive process, as in the case of the organic particles, he has been able to enlarge them by transferring them into fog-particles, so as to be within the possibility of accurate enumeration. His plan is to dilute a definite small quantity of common air with a fixed large quantity of filtered, dustless air, and allow the mixture to be super-saturated by water-vapour; the few particles of dust seize the moisture, become visible in drops, fall on a divided plate, and are there counted by means of a magnifying-glass.

The instrument employed by Mr. Aitken has taken various forms; in fact, he has so far improved it that it can be carried in the coat-pocket. But the original instrument, which we saw and used, is most easily described without the aid of diagrams. But, instead of his decimal system of measurements, we will use the ordinary system, that the dimensions may be more easily grasped by the general reader. Into a common glass flask of carafe-shape, and flat-bottomed, of 30 cubic inches capacity, are passed two small tubes, at the end of one of which is attached a square silver table, one inch long. A little water having been inserted, the flask is inverted, and the table is placed exactly one inch from the inverted bottom, so that the contents of the air above the table and below the bottom are one cubic inch. The observing table has been divided into a hundred equal squares, and is highly polished, with the burnishing all in one direction, so that during the observations it appears dark, when the finemist-particles, falling on it, glisten opal-like with the reflected light, in order that they may be more easily counted. The tube to which the silver table is attached is connected with two stop-cocks, one of which can admit a small measured portion of the air to be examined. The other tube in the flask is connected with an exhausting syringe, of 10 cubic inches capacity. Over the flask is placed a covering coloured black in the inside. In the top of this cover is inserted a powerful magnifying-glass, through which the particles on the silver table can be easily seen and counted. A little to the side of this magnifier is an opening in the cover, through which light is concentrated on the silver table. This light, again, has had to pass through a spherical globe of water, in order to abstract the heat rays, which might vitiate the observations.

To perform the experiment, the air in the flask is exhausted by the syringe. The flask is then filled with pure filtered air. One-tenth of a cubic inch of the air to be examined is then introduced into the flask, and mixed with the 30 cubic inches of



dustless air. After one stroke of the syringe this mixed air is made to occupy an additional space of 10 cubic inches; and this rarefying of the air so chills it that condensation of the water-vapour takes place on the dust-particles. The observer, looking through the magnifying-glass upon the silver table, sees the mist-particles fall like an opal shower on the table, and counts the number on a single square in two or three places, striking an average in his mind. Suppose the average number upon one of these squares were five, then on the whole table there would be 500; and these 500 mist-particles contain the 500 dust-particles which floated invisibly in the cubic inch of mixed air above the table. But, as there are 40 cubic inches of mixed air in the flask and syringe, the number of dust-particles in the whole is 40 times  $500=20,000$ ; that is, there are 20,000 dust-particles in the small quantity of common air (one-tenth of a cubic inch) which was introduced for examination; in other words, a cubic inch of that air contains 200,000 dust-particles—nearly a quarter of a million.

By this process Mr. Aitken has been able to count  $7\frac{1}{2}$  millions of dust-particles in one cubic inch of the ordinary air of Glasgow. We counted with him 4 millions in a cubic inch of the air outside of the Royal Society Rooms, Princes Street, Edinburgh. Inside the Room, after the Fellows had met for two hours, on a winter evening—the fire and gas having been burning for a considerable time—we found  $6\frac{1}{2}$  millions in a cubic inch of the air four feet from the floor; but near the ceiling no fewer than  $57\frac{1}{2}$  millions were counted in the cubic inch. He counted in one cubic inch of air immediately above a Bunsen flame the fabulous number of 489 millions of dust-particles. The lowest number he ever counted was at Lucerne, in Switzerland: 3,500 in the cubic inch. On the summit of Ben Nevis the observer, using Mr. Aitken's apparatus, counted from 214,400 down to 840 in the cubic inch. But on the morning of the 21st of July last there was a most marvellous observation made. Though at the sea-level the wind was steady, and the thermometer did not vary, at the summit the wind suddenly veered round to the opposite direction of that below, blowing out of a cyclone, and the temperature rose ten degrees. In consequence the extraordinarily low mean of only 34 dust-particles to the cubic inch was observed.

We now come to the most pleasant of the investigations in connection with dust. The very brilliant sunsets which began in the autumn of 1883, and continued during successive seasons with

gradually decreasing grandeur, have arrested the attention of the physicist as well as of the general observer. What is the cause of the brilliant colouring in these remarkable sunsets? What is the source of the immense wealth of the various shades of red which have been so universally admired? Gazing on a gorgeous sunset, the whole western heavens glowing with roseate hues, the observer sees the colours melting away before his eyes and becoming transformed into different hues. The clouds are of different sizes and of all shapes. Some float virgin-like in silver folds, others voyage in golden groups; some are embroidered with burning crimson, others are like 'islands all lovely in an emerald sea.' And when the flood of rosy light, as it deepens into bright crimson, brings out into bold relief the circlet of flaming mountain peaks, it is like a gorgeous transformation scene. Stranger still, when the sun sinks below the horizon, and a dull ashen grey has possessed the western heavens, what occasions the hectic flush on the eastern horizon? Gradually the clouds are tinged with light red from the eastern horizon all over the zenith; whence comes the colouring?

It is a strange coincidence that these remarkably fine sunsets have been since the tremendous eruptions at Krakatoa, in the Straits of Sunda. Along with the lava eruption there was ejected an enormous quantity of fine dust. The decks of vessels, hundreds of miles away, were covered with it. Mr. Verbreeck computed that no less than 70,000 cubic yards of dust actually fell round the volcano. This will give an idea of the enormous quantity of dust still floating in the atmosphere, and drifting all over the world. In the upper atmosphere, too, there must always be dust, for without the dust no clouds could be formed to shield us from the sun's scorching rays; and of cosmic dust there must be a considerable quantity in the air, produced by the waste from the millions of meteors that daily fall into it. Mr. Aitken has ably shown that the brilliancy and variety of the colouring are due to the suspended dust in the atmosphere.

Observers of the gorgeous sunsets and afterglows have been most particularly struck with the immense wealth of the various shades and tints of red. Now, if the glowing colours are due to the presence of dust in the air, there must be somewhere a display of the colours complementary to the reds, because the dust acts by a selective dispersion of the colours. The small dust-particles arrest the direct course of the rays of light and reflect them in all directions; but they principally reflect the rays of the violet

end of the spectrum, while the red rays pass on almost unchecked. Overhead deep blue reigns in awe-inspiring glory. As the sun passes below the horizon, and the lower stratum of air, with its larger particles of dust which reflect light, ceases to be illuminated, the depth and fullness of the blue most intensely increase. This effect is produced by the very fine particles of dust in the sky overhead being unable to scatter any colours unless those of short wave-lengths at the violet end of the spectrum. Thus we see, above, blue in its intensity without any of the red colours. When, however, the observer brings his eyes down in any direction except the west, he will see the blue mellowing into blue-green, green, and then rose-colour. And some of the most beautiful and delicate rose tints are formed by the air cooling, and depositing its moisture on the particles of dust, increasing the size of the particles till they are sufficiently large to stop and spread the red rays, when the sky glows with a strange Aurora-like light.

The dust theory of the splendour of sunset colouring is strengthened by the often glorious afterglows. The fiercely brilliant streaks of red have disappeared; over the mountain ridge a flush of orange hovers, and softens the approaching blue. The western hills, that once stood out bronzed against the glare of light, are sombre-hued. But suddenly, as by a fairy's wand, the roseate flush of beauty rises in the east, and stretches its beautiful tints all over the sky. As the sun sinks, but before it ceases to shine on our atmosphere, the temperature of the air begins to fall, and its cooling is accompanied by an increase in the size of the particles floating in it by the condensation of the water-vapour. The particles to the east lose the sun first, and are thus first cooled. Accordingly, the rays in that direction are best sifted by the larger water-clad particles of dust, and the roseate colouring is there more distinct than in the north and south. As the sun sinks further, the particles overhead become cooler, and attract the water-vapour; thus they increase in size, and thereby reflect the red rays. Here the red hues, at first visible in the east, slowly rise, pass overhead, and descend in the west to form the charming afterglow. Sometimes a flood of glory will roll once more along the summits of the hills, entrancing the attention of the artistic spectator.

All examinations of the volcanic dust lately collected from the atmosphere show that a great quantity of it is composed of small glassy crystals. An abundance of these would quite account for the peculiarity in the visibility of the first glow; and the evidence

seems to indicate that the quantity of such crystals is sufficient to produce the result. When these are fully illuminated, they become in turn a source of illumination, and reflect their reddish light all around. In winter sunsets, the water-clad dust-particles become frozen, and the peculiarly brilliant crimson is seen, colouring the dead beech-leaves and red sandstone houses, and making them appear to be painted with vermillion.

If, then, there were no fine dust-particles in the upper strata of the atmosphere, the sunset effect would be paler; if there were no large particles in the lower strata, the beautiful sunset effects would cease. In fact, if our atmosphere were perfectly void of dust-particles, the sun's light would simply pass through without being seen, and soon after the sun dipped below the horizon total darkness would ensue. The length of our twilight, therefore, depends on the amount of dust in one form or another in our atmosphere. Not only, then, would a dustless atmosphere have no clouds, but there would be no charming sunsets, and no thought-inspiring twilights.

There is a generally prevalent fallacy that the colouring at sunrise or sunset is much finer when seen from the summit of a mountain than from a valley. To this matter Mr. Aitken has been giving some attention, and his observations point the very opposite way, corroborative of his dust-theory. From the summit of the Rigi Kulm in Switzerland he saw several sunsets, but was disappointed with the flatness and weakness of the colouring; whereas in the valley, on the same evenings, careful observers were enchanted with the gorgeous display. The lower dusty humid air was the chief source of the colour in the sunset effects. His opinion is strengthened by the fact that when from the summit he saw large cumulous clouds, the near ones were always snowy white, while it was only the distant ones that were tarnished yellow, showing that the light came to these clouds unchanged, and it was only the air between the far-distant clouds and his eye that tarnished them yellow. On the mountain-top it required a great distance to give even a slight colouring. The larger and more numerous dust-particles in the air of the valley are, therefore, productive of more brilliant colouring in sunrise or sunset than the smaller and fewer particles on the mountain-top.

It is now admitted that the inherent hue of water is blueness. Even distilled water has been proved to be almost exactly of the same tint as a solution of Prussian blue. This is corroborated by the fact that the purer the water is in nature, the bluer is the

hue. But though the selective absorption of the water determines its blueness, it is the dust-particles suspended in it which determine its brilliancy. If the water of the Mediterranean be taken from different places and examined by means of a concentrated beam of light, it is seen to hold in suspension millions of dust-particles of different kinds. To this fine dust it owes its beautiful, brilliant, and varied colouring. Where there are few particles there is little light reflected, and the colour of the water is deep blue; but where there are many particles more light is reflected, and the colour is chalky blue-green. Along its shores the Mediterranean washes the rocks and rubs off the minute solid particles, which make the water beautifully brilliant.

That this is the case can be illustrated. If a dark metal vessel be filled with a weak solution of Prussian blue, the water will appear quite dark and void of colour. But if some fine white powder be thrown into the vessel, the water at once becomes of a brilliant blue colour; if more powder be added, the brilliancy increases. This accounts for the changes of depth and brilliancy of colour in the several shores of the Mediterranean. In Lake Como, where there is an entire absence of white dust-particles, the water is of a deep blue colour, but void of brilliancy; but, where the Lake enters the river Adda, the increase of the current rubs down fine reflecting particles from the rocks; in consequence, there the water is of a finer blue. When the dust-particles carried down by the Rhone spread out into the centre of the Lake of Geneva, the colour assumes the deeper blue, rivalling in brilliancy any water in the world.

The phenomenon called a haze puzzled investigators until Mr. Aitken explained it on the principle of the condensing power of dust-particles. Haze is only an arrested form of condensation of water-vapour. If one half of a dusty pane of glass be cleaned in cold weather, the clean part will remain undewed, while the dusty part is damp to the eye and greasy to the touch. Why is this?

Fit up an open box with two pipes, one for taking in water and the other for taking away the overflow. Inside fix a thermometer. Cover the top edge of the box with indiarubber, and fix down with spring catches (so as to make the box water-tight) a glass mirror, on which dust has been allowed to collect for some time. Clean the dust carefully off one half of the mirror, so that one half of the glass covering the box is clean and the other half dusty. Pour cold water through the pipe into the box, so as to



lower the temperature of the mirror, and carefully observe when condensation begins on each of the halves, taking a note of the temperature. It will be found that the condensation of the water-vapour appears on the dust-particles before coming down to the natural dew-point temperature of the clean glass. The difference between the two temperatures indicates the temperature above the dew-point at which the dust condenses the water-vapour. Mr. Aitken found that the condensing power of the dust in the air of a smoking-room varied from  $4^{\circ}$  to  $8^{\circ}$  Fahr. above the dew-point, whenever that of the outer air varied from  $3^{\circ}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ .

Moisture is, therefore, deposited on the dust-particles of the air which is not saturated, and condensation takes place while the air is comparatively dry, before the temperature is lowered to the dew-point. The clearest air, then, has some haze; and, as the humidity increases, the thickness of the air increases. In all haze the temperature is above the dew-point. And in all circumstances the haze can be accounted for by the condensing power of the dust-particles in the atmosphere, at a higher temperature than that required for the formation of fogs, or mists, or rain.

But whence comes the dust? Meteoric waste and volcanic *débris* have already been mentioned. On or near the sea the air is impregnated by the fine brine-dust lashed by the waves and broken upon the rocks and vessel-sides. But the most active of all surfaces as a fog-producer in towns is burnt sulphur. No less than 350 tons of the products of the combustion of sulphur from the coal are thrown into the atmosphere of London every winter day. But the powerful deodorising and antiseptic properties of the sulphur assist in sanitation; and it is better to bear the inconvenience of fogs than be subjected to the evils of a pestilence. At the same time it should be known that smoke-particles can be deposited by the agency of electricity. If an electric discharge be passed through a jar containing smoke, the dust will be deposited so as to make the air clear. Lightning clears the air, restoring the devitalised oxygen and depositing the dust on the ground. Might it not, then, be possible for strong enough electrical discharges from several large voltaic batteries to attack the smoke in the air of large cities, and especially the fumes from chemical works, so as to bring down the dust in the form of rain instead of leaving it in the form of mystifying fog?

Organic germs also float in the air. Some are being vomited



into the air from the pestilential hot-beds of the lowest slums. In a filthy town no less than thirty millions of bacteria in a year will be deposited by the rain upon every square yard of surface. A man breathes thirty-six germs every minute in a close town, and double that in a close bedroom. The wonder is how people escape sickness, though most of these germs are not deadly. In a healthy man, however, the warm lung surfaces repel the colder dust-particles of all kinds, and the moisture evaporating from the surface of the air-tubes helps the prevention of the dust clinging to the surface.

From this outline the reader will observe the increasing importance of careful attention to the influence of dust in the economy of nature. As a sickness-bearer and a death-bearer it must be attacked and rendered harmless ; as a source of beauty unrivalled we must rejoice at its existence. The clouds that shelter us from the sun's scorching heat, the refreshing showers that clear the air and cheer the soil, the brilliancy of the deep-blue sea and lake, the charms of twilight, and above all the glory of the colours of sunrise and sunset, are all dependent upon the existence of millions of dust-particles which are within the power of man's enumeration. No more brilliant achievement has been made in the field of meteorology than during the past few years by the careful observation and inventive genius of Mr. Aitken in connection with the importance of dust in air and water.

J. G. MCPHERSON.

## *The Wall-paper.*

WHEN I was only five years old,  
 My mother, who was soon to die,  
 Raised me, with fingers soft and cold,  
 On high ;

Until, against the parlour wall,  
 I reached a golden paper flower ;  
 How proud was I, and ah ! how tall,  
 That hour !

‘This shining tulip shall be yours,  
 Your own, your very own,’ she said ;  
 The mark that made it mine endures  
 In red.

I scarcely saw it from the floor ;  
 I craned to catch the scarlet sign ;  
 No gift so precious had before  
 Been mine.

A paper tulip on a wall !  
 A boon that ownership defied !  
 Yet this was dearer far than all  
 Beside.

Real toys, real flowers that lavish love  
 Had strewn before me, all and each  
 Paled by this royal gift above  
 My reach.

'Twas like a treasure in a dream  
That never could be mine to hold ;  
I triumphed in its flickering beam  
Of gold.

Ah ! now that time has worked its will,  
And fooled my heart, and dazed my eyes,  
Delusive tulips prove me still  
Unwise.

Still, still the eluding flower that glows  
Above the hands that yearn and clasp  
Seems brighter than the genuine rose  
I grasp.

So has it been since I was born ;  
So will it be until I die ;  
Stars, the best flowers of all, adorn  
The sky.

EDMUND GOSSE.

## *The Latest about Spiders.*

'SPIDER' and 'spinner' are synonymous words. From time immemorial the animal has attracted observation principally on account of its web-making skill, and in many languages other than our own its name testifies to this fact. Nevertheless, it is only quite recently that anything very definite has been known of the complicated apparatus by which the spinning is accomplished; and many statements with regard to it, either entirely mistaken or much exaggerated, are constantly repeated in works of natural history, and have obtained a wide popular currency.

The results of recent research in this field will possibly prove of general interest, while they certainly will not tend to diminish the admiration which has always been excited by the strange talent which is so characteristic of this group of animals.

The external spinning organs are situated on a little circular area underneath the spider's abdomen, and consist of four or six finger-like protuberances, apparently bristling with hairs. These protuberances are the *spinnerets*, and are exceedingly mobile and muscular, the animal being able to rub them together or to separate them widely at will. When at rest, they form a little pyramid, their free ends being in contact at its apex, in the middle of the circular area. In those spiders which possess six, two are comparatively small, and are concealed within the pyramid formed by the other four.

The hair-like bodies with which they bristle are in reality excessively fine tubes, prolonged beyond the spinnerets themselves. Among them may be noticed a very few of much greater calibre and more tube-like appearance.

It is from these various tubes that the spider-silk is emitted, and they are continuous with the internal organs, or 'glands,' where it is formed.

Now, a gland is a kind of factory. Wherever a fluid, such as milk, or venom, or bile, is elaborated by an animal, the object is accomplished by a special gland, which somehow withdraws from the blood the materials it requires.

Why one gland should be able to secrete milk and another poison from the same source is by no means easy to understand, but in some way this power of selection is possessed by them.

The real organs, therefore, which produce the silk are the spinning glands. They manufacture and store it up in the form of a gummy fluid, and it is only on meeting the air as it proceeds from the fine spinning tubes that it hardens and forms silken threads. Each gland has its own separate opening on one of the hair-like tubes which crown the spinnerets.

Now, when the small size of the entire animal and the microscopic dimensions of the spinning tubes are taken into account, it will be easily understood that the zoologist who undertook to investigate the individual glands and trace them to their orifices had set himself no easy task. It has, however, been successfully accomplished in the case of eight different genera of spiders by Dr. Carl Apstein, whose performance is a notable one even in the annals of microscopic anatomy.

Of all the different groups of spiders, those in which the organs we are considering are most highly developed are the Orbitelariae, the spinners of the familiar wheel-like web. If, therefore, we confine our attention to a member of this group—which is conveniently represented by the large garden spider with the white cross on its back (*Epeira diademata*)—we shall find the spinning apparatus in its most complex form.

This spider possesses six spinnerets, or finger-like processes, bearing the spinning tubes. They are arranged in three pairs—the anterior, the middle, and the posterior. Within the body of the spider are found five distinct kinds of spinning glands, some small and numerous, others large and few in number. Altogether there are about four hundred glands, and this, therefore, is approximately the maximum number of threads which the animal can emit. Moreover, it is known precisely how the orifices of these various glands are distributed over the ends of the six spinnerets.

Now, as there are here five varieties of spinning glands, the inevitable inference is that they are used by the spider for different purposes; and we are naturally led to inquire what these purposes may be. In what different spinning operations does the animal engage?

There are three distinct operations which occur to us after a little consideration—the construction of the web, the binding up of captured flies, and the building of the cocoon of fluffy yellow silk, which affords protection for the eggs.

But on further examination the web proves not to be of the same nature throughout. The foundation lines between which it is stretched, and the radial lines, or spokes of the wheel, differ considerably from the spiral line which, beginning near the centre, crosses the radii in successive curves until the circumference is reached. The former are dry and not adhesive, but the spiral line, besides possessing greater elasticity, is studded over with viscid globules, which act like bird-lime on any insect which is unfortunate enough to come into contact with them.

Not long ago the writer endeavoured to determine the particular use of the five different kinds of glands. The method to be adopted was apparently simple enough, though the practical difficulties proved to be by no means few. The spider was to be caught in the act of performing its various spinning operations; and, by the aid of a microscope, the thread it happened to be employing was to be traced to the particular spinning-tubes, and, therefore, to the particular glands from which it emanated.

The first successful experiments led to rather an interesting discovery, quite at variance with the current belief with regard to the nature of the spider's thread.

It had previously been noticed that an apparently single line started from the point to which it was attached, as a multitude of fine threads spreading out in all directions. What more natural, therefore, than that the single line should be thought to consist of multitudinous finer threads fused or interwoven together? What more natural, again, than that the number of these constituent threads should be exaggerated from hundreds to thousands, and a fabulous fineness attributed to them?

But the microscope told another tale, and it was quickly evident that the numerous attachment threads ceased almost immediately, and only served to anchor the continuous line to its starting-point, while the line itself consisted sometimes of two, sometimes of four, strands, proceeding from the larger tubes previously alluded to. These strands, moreover, were not interwoven or fused, but simply lying side by side, and easily separated by slackening the line and blowing upon it. As an example of the method of investigation, one of the earlier experiments may be described rather more fully. A simple apparatus was



devised so that the creature could be confined—quite painlessly—in such a way that its spinnerets could be observed under the microscope. With a little dexterity this confinement was accomplished with the line it was engaged in weaving still unbroken. By the aid of a good light and a gentle strain on the line its precise source could be clearly perceived.

Now, when a thread has once been started, it may be artificially drawn out from the spider almost indefinitely. The animal can throw new tubes into play, but it does not seem able to directly prevent the flow of the silk. The mobility of the spinnerets is wonderful to watch. The line may at first consist of two strands emanating from the larger tubes. Presently the animal may decide to strengthen it, and the spinnerets are rubbed together, with the result that two more tubes are brought into play, and the line is fourfold. This may again be varied by the employment of still other tubes, until perhaps the whole battery is in action. The result is a band rather than a thread of silk, and the strands are perfectly distinct, without any adherence or interweaving. Finally, a movement more abrupt than usual may break the silk—an action generally accomplished in the free state by one of the hind legs—and the flow may cease.

Further experiments prove that, of the three kinds of larger glands, one serves chiefly to lay down the foundation lines and radii of the web, a second to supply the silk for the cocoon, and the third to furnish the viscid matter with which the spiral line is studded. Of the two groups of small and numerous glands one is principally used to anchor the stouter line to the point of departure, while both supply the strands of the broad silken band with which a captured insect is so deftly enwrapped.

Here again it may be said that fact is stranger than fiction, and the complexity of the spider's spinning apparatus appears even more wonderful in the further light that has been thrown upon it, though we are forced to discard the oft-repeated fable that the line, fine as it appears, is composed of thousands of inconceivably finer strands.

CECIL WARBURTON.

## *The Three Fates<sup>1</sup>.*

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD, AUTHOR OF 'MR. ISAACS,'  
'DR. CLAUDIUS,' &c.

### CHAPTER I.

**JONAH WOOD** was bitterly disappointed in his son. During five-and-twenty years he had looked in vain for the development of those qualities in George which alone, in his opinion, could insure success. But though George could talk intelligently about the great movements of business in New York, it was clear by this time that he did not possess what his father called 'business instincts.' The old man could have forgiven him his defective appreciation in the matter of dollars and cents, however, if he had shown the slightest inclination to adopt one of the regular professions; in other words, if George had ceased to waste his time in the attempt to earn money with his pen, and had submitted to becoming a scribe in a lawyer's office, old Wood would have been satisfied. The boy's progress might have been slow, but it would have been sure.

It was strange to see how this elderly man, who had been ruined by the exercise of his own business faculties, still pinned his faith upon his own views and theories of finance, and regarded it as a real misfortune to be the father of a son who thought differently from himself. It would have satisfied the height of his ambition to see George installed as a clerk on a nominal salary in one of the great banking houses. Possibly, at an earlier period, and before George had finally refused to enter a career of business, there may have been in the bottom of the old man's heart a hope that his son might some day become a financial power, and wreak vengeance for his own and his father's losses upon Thomas Craik or his heirs after him; but if this wish existed Jonah Wood had honestly tried to put it out of the way.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright 1891, by F. Marion Crawford.

He was of a religious disposition, and his moral rectitude was above all doubt. He did not forgive his enemies, but he sincerely meant to do so, and did his best not to entertain any hope of revenge.

The story of his wrongs was a simple one. He had formerly been a very successful man. Of a good New England family, he had come to New York when very young, possessed of a small capital, full of integrity, industry, and determination. At the age of forty he was at the head of a banking firm which had for a time enjoyed a reputation of some importance. Then he had married a young lady of good birth and possessing a little fortune, to whom he had been attached for years and who had waited for him with touching fidelity. Twelve months later she had died in giving birth to George. Possibly the terrible shock weakened Jonah Wood's nerves and disturbed the balance of his faculties. At all events it was at this time that he began to enter into speculation. At first he was very successful, and his success threw him into closer intimacy with Thomas Craik, a cousin of his dead wife's. For a time everything prospered with the bank, while Wood acquired the habit of following Craik's advice. On an ill-fated day, however, the latter persuaded him to invest largely in a certain railway not yet begun, but which was completed in a marvellously short space of time. In the course of a year or two it was evident that the road, which Craik insisted on running upon the most ruinous principles, must soon become bankrupt. It had of course been built to compete with an old-established line; the usual war of rates set in, the old road suffered severely, and the young one was ruined. This was precisely what Craik had anticipated. So soon as the bankruptcy was declared and the liquidation terminated, he bought up every bond and share upon which he could lay his hands. Wood was ruined, together with a number of other heavy investors. The road, however, having ceased to pay interest on its debts, continued to run at rates disastrous to its more honest competitor, and before long the latter was obliged in self-defence to buy up its rival. When that extremity was reached Thomas Craik was in possession of enough bonds and stock to give him a controlling interest, and he sold the ruined railway at his own price, realising a large fortune by the transaction. Wood was not only financially broken; his reputation, too, had suffered in the catastrophe. At first, people looked askance at him, believing that he had got a share of the profits, and that he was only pretending poverty

until the scandal should blow over, though he had in reality sacrificed almost everything he possessed in the honourable liquidation of the bank's affairs, and found himself at the age of fifty-seven in possession only of the small fortune that had been his wife's and of the small house which had escaped the general ruin, and in which he now lived. Thomas Craik had robbed him, as he had robbed many others, and Jonah Wood knew it, though there was no possibility of ever recovering a penny of his losses. His nerve was gone, and by the time people had discovered that he was the most honest of men he was more than half forgotten by those he had known best. He had neither the energy nor the courage to begin life again, and although he had cleared his reputation of all blame, he knew that he had made the great mistake, and that no one would ever again trust to his judgment. It seemed easiest to live in the little house, to get what could be got out of life for himself and his son on an income of scarcely two thousand dollars, and to shut himself out from his former acquaintance.

And yet, though his own career had ended in such lamentable failure, he would gladly have seen George begin where he had begun. George would have succeeded in doing all those things which he himself had left undone, and he might have lived to see established on a firm basis the great fortune which for a few brief years had been his in a floating state. But George could not be brought to understand this point of view. His youthful recollections were connected with monetary disaster, and his first boyish antipathies had been conceived against everything that bore the name of business. What he felt for the career of the money-maker was more than antipathy; it amounted to a positive horror which he could not overcome. From time to time his father returned to the old story of his wrongs and misfortunes, going over the tale as he sat with George through the long winter evenings, and entering into every detail of the transaction which had ruined him. In justice to the young man it must be admitted that he was patient on those occasions, and listened with outward calm to the long technical explanations, the interminable concatenation of figures and the jarring cadence of phrases that all ended with the word 'dollars.' But the talk was as painful to him as a violin played out of tune is to a musician, and it reacted upon his nerves and produced physical pain of an acute kind. He could set his features in an expression of respectful attention, but he could not help twisting his long smooth fingers together under

the edge of the table, where his father could not see them. The very name of money disgusted him, and when the great failure had been talked of in the evening it haunted his dreams throughout the night and destroyed his rest, so that he awoke with a sense of nervousness and distress from which he could not escape until late in the following day.

Jonah Wood saw more of this peculiarity than his son suspected, though he failed to understand it. With him, nervousness took a different form, manifesting itself in an abnormal anxiety concerning George's welfare, combined with an unfortunate disposition to find fault. Of late, indeed, he had not been able to accuse the young man of idleness, since he was evidently working to the utmost of his strength, though his occupations brought him but little return. It seemed a pity to Jonah Wood that so much good time and so much young energy should be wasted over pen, ink, paper, and books which left no record of a daily substantial gain. He, too, slept little, though his iron-grey face betrayed nothing of what passed in his mind.

He loved his son in his own untrusting way. It was his affection, combined with his inability to believe much good of what he loved, that undermined and embittered the few pleasures still left to him. He had never seen any hope except in money, and since George hated the very mention of lucre there could be no hope for him either. A good man, a scrupulously honest man according to his lights, he could only see goodness from one point of view, and virtue represented in one dress. Goodness was obedience to parental authority, and virtue the imitation of parental ideas. George believed that obedience should play no part in determining what he should do with his talent, and that imitation, though it be the sincerest flattery, may lay the foundation for the most hopeless of all failures—the failure to do that for which a man is best adapted.

George had not deliberately chosen a literary career because he felt himself fitted for it. He was in reality far too modest to look forward from the first to the ultimate satisfaction of his ambitions. His lonely life had driven him to writing as a means of expressing himself without incurring his father's criticism and contradiction. Not understanding in the least the nature of imagination, he believed himself lacking in this respect, but he had at once found an immense satisfaction in writing down his opinions concerning certain new books that had fallen into his hands. Then, being emboldened by that belief in his own judg-

ment which young men acquire very easily when they are not brought into daily contact with their intellectual equals, he had ventured to offer the latest of his attempts to one editor and then to another and another. At last he had found one who chanced to be in a human humour and who glanced at one of the papers.

‘It is not worthless,’ said the autocrat, ‘but it is quite useless. Everybody has done with the book months ago. Do you want to earn a little money by reviewing?’

George expressed his readiness to do so with alacrity. The editor scribbled half a dozen words on a slip of paper from a block and handed it to George, telling him where to take it. As a first result the young man carried away a couple of volumes of new-born trash upon which to try his hand. A quarter of what he wrote was published in the literary column of the newspaper. He had yet to learn the cynical practice of counting words, upon which so much depends in dealing with the daily press, but the idea of actually earning something, no matter how little, overcame his first feeling of disgust at the nature of the work. In time he acquired the necessary tricks and did very well. By sheer determination he devoted all his best hours of the day to the drudgery of second-class criticism, and only allowed himself to write what was agreeable to his own brain when the day’s work was done.

The idea of producing a book did not suggest itself to him. In his own opinion he had none of the necessary gifts for original writing, while he fancied that he possessed those of the critic in a rather unusual degree. His highest ambition was to turn out a volume of essays on other people’s doings and writings, and he was constantly labouring in his leisure moments at long papers treating of celebrated works, in what he believed to be a spirit of profound analysis. As yet no one had bestowed the slightest attention upon his efforts; no serious article of his had found its way into the press, though a goodly number of his carefully copied manuscripts had issued from the offices of various periodicals in the form of waste paper. Strange to say, he was not discouraged by these failures. The satisfaction, so far as he had known any, had consisted in the writing down of his views; and though he wished it were possible to turn his ink-stained pages into money, his natural detestation of all business transactions whatsoever made him extremely philosophical in repeated failure. Even in regard to his daily drudgery, which was regularly paid, the least pleasant moment was the one when he had to begin his round



from one newspaper cashier to another to receive the little cheques which made him independent of his father so far as his only luxuries of new books and tobacco were concerned. Pride, indeed, was now at the bottom of his resolution to continue in the uninteresting course that had been opened before him. Having once succeeded in buying for himself what he wanted or needed beyond his daily bread, he would have been ashamed to ever go again for pocket-money to his father.

The nature of his occupation, which he would not relinquish, was beginning to produce its natural effect upon his character. He felt that he was better than his work, and the inevitable result ensued. He felt that he was hampered and tied, and that every hour spent in such labour was a page stolen from the book of his reputation; that he was giving for a pitiful wage the precious time in which something important might have been accomplished, and that his life would turn out a failure if it continued to run on much longer in the same groove. And yet he assumed that it would be absolutely impossible for him to abandon his drudgery in order to devote himself solely to the series of essays on which he had pinned his hopes of success. His serious work, as he called it, made little progress when interrupted at every step by the necessity for writing twaddle about trash.

It may be objected that George Wood should not have written twaddle, but should have employed his best energies in the improvement of second-class literature by systematically telling the truth about it. Unfortunately the answer to such a stricture is not far to seek. If he had written what he thought, the newspapers would have ceased to employ him; not that it is altogether impossible to write honestly about the great rivers of minor books which flow east and west and north and south from the publishers' gardens, but because the critic who has the age, experience, and talent to bestow faint praise without inflicting damnation commands a high price and cannot be wasted on little authors and their little publications. The beginner often knows that he is writing twaddle and regrets it, and he very likely knows how to write in strains of enthusiastic eulogium or of viciously cruel abuse; but though he have all these things, he has not yet acquired the unaffected charity which covers a multitude of sins, and which is the result of an ancient and wise good feeling entertained between editors, publishers and critics. He cannot really feel mildly well disposed towards a book he despises, and his only chance of expressing gentle sentiments not his own lies in the

plentiful use of unmitigated twaddle. If he remains a critic, he is either lifted out of the sphere of the daily saleable trash to that of serious first-class literature, or else he imbibes through the pores of his soul such proportional parts of the editor's and the publisher's wishes as shall combine in his own character and produce the qualities which they both desire to find there and to see expressed in his paragraphs.

It could not be said that George Wood was discontented with what he found to do, so much as with being constantly hindered from doing something better. And that better thing which he would have done, and believed that he could have done, was in reality far from having reached the stage of being clearly defined. He had never felt any strong liking for fiction, and his mind had been nourished upon unusually solid intellectual food, while the outward circumstances of his life had necessarily left much to his imagination which to most young men of five-and-twenty is already matter of experience. As a boy he had been too much with older people, and had therefore thought too much to be boyish. Possibly, too, he had seen more than was good for him, for his father had left him but a short time at school in the days of their prosperity, and, being unable to leave New York for any length of time, had more than once sent him abroad with an elderly tutor from whom the lad had acquired all sorts of ideas that were too big for him. He had been wrongly supposed to be of a delicate constitution too, and had been indulged in all manner of intellectual whims and fancies, whereby he had gained a smattering of many sciences and literatures at an age when he ought to have been following a regular course of instruction. Then, before he was thought old enough to enter a university, the crash had come.

Jonah Wood was far too conscientious a man not to sacrifice whatever he could for the completion of his son's education. For several years he deprived himself of every luxury, in order that George might have the assistance he so greatly needed while making his studies at Columbia College in his native city. Then only did the father realise how he had erred in allowing the boy to receive the desultory and aimless teaching that had seemed so generous in the days of wealth. He knew more or less well a variety of subjects of which his companions were wholly ignorant, but he was utterly unversed in much of their knowledge. And this was not all, for George had acquired from his former tutor a misguided contempt for the accepted manner of dealing with cer-

tain branches of learning, without possessing that grasp of the matters in hand which alone justifies a man in thinking differently from the great mass of his fellows. It is not well to ridicule the American method of doing things until one is master of some other.

It was from the time when George entered college that he began to be a constant source of disappointment to his father. The elderly man had received a good, old-fashioned, thoroughly prejudiced education, and though he remembered little Latin and less Greek, he had not forgotten the way in which he had been made to learn both. George's way of talking about his studies disturbed his father's sense of intellectual propriety, which was great, without exciting his curiosity, which was infinitesimally small. With him also prevailed the paternal view which holds that young men must necessarily distinguish themselves above their companions if they really possess any exceptional talent, and his peace of mind was further endangered by his sense of responsibility for George's beginnings. If he had believed that George was stupid, he would have resigned himself to that dispensation of Providence. But he thought otherwise. The boy was not an ordinary boy, and if he failed to prove it by taking prizes in competition, he must be lazy or his preparation must have been defective. No other alternative was to be found, and the fault therefore lay either with himself or with his father.

George never obtained a prize, and barely passed his examinations at all. Jonah Wood made a point of seeing all his examiners as well as the instructors who had known him during his college life. Three-quarters of the number asserted that the young fellow was undeniably clever, and added, expressing themselves with professorial politeness, that his previous studies seemed to have taken a direction other than that of the college 'curriculum,' as they called it. The professor of Greek presumed that George might have distinguished himself in Latin, the professor of Latin surmised that Greek might have been his strong point; both believed that he had talent for mathematics, while the mathematician remarked that he seemed to have a very good understanding, but that it would be turned to better account in the pursuit of classical studies. Jonah Wood returned to his home very much disturbed in mind, and from that day his anxiety steadily increased. As it became more clear that his son would never accept a business career, but would probably waste his opportunities in literary dabbling, the good man's alarm became extreme. He

did not see that George's one true talent lay in his ready power of assimilating unfamiliar knowledge by a process of intuition that escapes methodical learners, any more than he understood that the boy's one solid acquirement was the power of using his own language. He was not to be too much blamed, perhaps, for the young man himself was only dimly conscious of his yet undeveloped power. What made him write was neither the pride of syntax nor the certainty of being right in his observations; he was driven to paper to escape from the torment of the desire to express something, he knew not what, which he could express in no other way. He found no congenial conversation at home and little abroad, and yet he felt that he had something to say and must say it.

It should not be supposed that either Jonah Wood's misfortunes or his poverty, which was after all comparative, though hard to bear, prevented George from mixing in the world with which he was connected by his mother's birth, and to some extent by his father's former position. The old gentleman, indeed, was too proud to renew his acquaintance with people who had thought him dishonourable until he had proved himself spotless; but the very demonstration of his uprightness had been so convincing and clear that it constituted a patent of honour for his son. Many persons who had blamed themselves for their hasty judgment would have been glad to make amends by their cordial reception of the man they had so cruelly mistaken. George, however, was quite as proud as his father, and much more sensitive. He remembered well enough the hard-hearted, boyish stare he had seen in the eyes of some of his companions when he was but just seventeen years old; and later, at college, when his father's self-sacrifice was fully known, and his old associates had held out their hands to his in the hope of making everything right again, George had met them with stony eyes and scornful civility. It was not easy to forgive, and with all his excellent qualities and noble honesty of purpose, Jonah Wood was not altogether displeased to know that his son held his head high and drew back from the renewal of fair-weather friendships. Almost against his will he encouraged him in his conduct, while doing his best to appear at least indifferent.

George needed but little encouragement to remain in social obscurity, though he was conscious of a rather contemptible hope that he might one day play a part in society, surrounded by all the advantages of wealth and general respect which belong especi-

ally to those few who possess both, by inheritance rather than as a result of their own labours. He was not quite free from that subtle aristocratic taint which has touched so many members of American society. Like the wind, no man can tell whence it comes nor whither it goes; but, unlike the ill wind in the proverb, it blows no good to any one. It is not the breath of that republican inequality which is caused by two men extracting a different degree of advantage from the same circumstances; it is not the inevitable inequality produced by the inevitable struggle for existence, wealth and power; but it is the fictitious inequality caused by the pretence that the accident of a man's birth should of itself constitute for him a claim to have special opportunities made for him, adapted to his use and protected by law for his particular benefit. It is a fallacy which is in the air, and which threatens to produce evil consequences wherever it becomes localised.

Perhaps, at some future time yet far distant, a man will arise who shall fathom and explain the great problems presented by human vanity. No more interesting study could be found wherewith to occupy the greatest mind, and assuredly none in the pursuit of which a man would be so constantly confronted by new and varied matter for research. One main fact at least we know. Vanity is the boundless, circumambient and all-penetrating ether in which all man's thoughts and actions have being and receive manifestation. All moral and intellectual life is either full of it and in sympathy with it, breathing it as our bodies breathe the air, or is out of balance with it in the matter of quantity, and is continually struggling to restore its own lost equilibrium. It is as impossible to conceive of anything being done in the world without also conceiving the element of vanity as the medium for the action, as it is to imagine motion without space, or time without motion. To say that any man who succeeds in the race for superiority of any sort is without vanity, is downright nonsense; to assert that any man can reach success without it, would be to state more than any one has yet been able to prove. Let us accept the fact that we are all vain, whether we be saints or sinners, men of action or men of thought, men who leave our sign-manual upon the page of our little day or men who trudge through the furrows of a nameless life ploughing and sowing that others may reap and eat and be merry. After all, does not our conception of heaven suggest to us a life from which all vanity is absent, and does not our idea of hell show us an existence in which vanity reigns



supreme and hopeless, without prospect of satisfaction? Let us at least strive that our vanity may neither do injury to our fellow-men nor recoil and become ridiculous in ourselves.

Enough has been said to define and explain the character and life of the young man whose history this work is to relate. He himself was far from being conscious of all his virtues, faults, and capabilities. He neither knew his own energy nor was aware of the hidden enthusiasm which was only just beginning to make itself felt as a vague, uneasy longing for something that should surpass ordinary things. He did not know that he possessed singular talents as well as unusual defects. He had not even begun to look upon life as a problem offered him for solution, and upon his own heart as an object for his own study. He scarcely felt that he had a heart at all, nor knew where to look for it in others. His life was not happy, and yet he had not tasted the bitter sources of real unhappiness. He was oppressed by his surroundings, but he could not have told what he would have done with the most untrammelled liberty. He despised money, he worked for a pittance, and yet he secretly longed for all that money could buy. He was profoundly attached to his father, and yet he found the good man's company intolerable. He shrank from a society in which he might have been a welcome guest, and yet he dreamed of playing a great part in it some day. He believed himself cynical when he was in reality quixotic, his idols of gold were hidden behind images of clay, and he really cared little for those things which he had schooled himself to admire the most. He fancied himself a critic when he was foredestined by his nature and his circumstances to become an object of criticism to others. He forced his mind to do what it found least congenial, not acting in obedience to any principle or idea of duty, but because he was sure that he knew his own abilities, and that no other path lay open to success. He was in the darkest part of the transition which precedes development, for he was in that period during which a man makes himself imagine that he has laid hold on the thread of the future, while something he will not heed warns him that the chaos is wilder than ever before. In the dark hour before manhood's morning he was journeying resolutely away from the coming dawn.

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## CHAPTER II

'It is very sad,' observed Mrs. Sherrington Trimm thoughtfully. 'Their mother died in London last autumn, and now they are quite alone—nobody with them but an aunt, or something like that—poor girls! I am so glad they are rich, at least. You ought to know them.'

'Ought I?' asked the visitor who was drinking his tea on the other side of the fireplace. 'You know I do not go into society.'

'The girls go nowhere either. They are still in mourning. You ought to know them. Who knows, you might marry one or the other.'

'I will never marry a fortune.'

'Do not be silly, George!'

The relationship between the two speakers was not very close. George Winton Wood's mother had been a second cousin of Mrs. Sherrington Trimm's, and the two ladies had not been on very friendly terms with each other. Moreover, Mrs. Trimm had nothing to do with old Jonah Wood, the father of the young man with whom she was now speaking, and Jonah Wood refused to have anything to do with her. Nevertheless she called his son by his first name, and the latter usually addressed her as 'Cousin Totty.' An examination of Mrs. Sherrington Trimm's baptismal certificate would have revealed the fact that she had been christened Charlotte, but parental fondness had made itself felt with its usual severity in such cases, and before she was a year old she had been labelled with the comic diminutive which had stuck to her ever since, through five-and-twenty years of maidenhood, and twenty years more of married life. On her visiting cards and in her formal invitations she appeared as Mrs. Sherrington Trimm; but the numerous members of New York society who were related to her by blood or marriage called her 'Totty' to her face, while those who claimed no connection called her 'Totty' behind her back; and though she may live beyond threescore years and ten, and though her strength come to sorrow and weakness, she will be 'Totty' still, to the verge of the grave, and beyond, even after she is comfortably laid away in the family vault at Greenwood.

After all, the name was not inappropriate, so far at least as Mrs. Trimm's appearance was concerned; for she was very smooth, and round, and judiciously plump, short, fair, and neatly made,

with pretty little hands and feet ; active and not ungraceful, sleek but not sleepy ; having small, sharp blue eyes, a very obliging and permanent smile, a diminutive pointed nose, salmon-coloured lips, and perfect teeth. Her good points did not, indeed, conceal her age altogether, but they obviated all necessity for an apology to the world for the crime of growing old ; and those features which were less satisfactory to herself were far from being offensive to others.

She bore in her whole being and presence the stamp of a comfortable life. There is nothing more disturbing to society than the forced companionship of a person who either is, or looks, uncomfortable, in body, mind, or fortune, and many people owe their popularity almost solely to a happy faculty of seeming always at their ease. It is certain that neither birth, wealth, nor talent will of itself make man or woman popular, nor even when all three are united in the possession of one individual ; but, on the other hand, they are not drawbacks to social success, provided they are merely means to the attainment of that unobtrusively careless good humour which the world loves. Mrs. Sherrington Trimm knew this. If not talented, she possessed at all events a pedigree and a fortune ; and as for talent, she looked upon culture as an hereditary disease peculiar to Bostonians, and though not contagious, yet full of danger, inasmuch as its presence in a well-organised society must necessarily be productive of discomfort. All the charm of general conversation must be gone, she thought, when a person appeared who was both able and anxious to set everybody right. She even went so far as to say that, if everybody were poor, it would be very disagreeable to be rich. She never wished to do what others could not do ; she only aimed at being among the first to do what everybody would do by-and-by, as a matter of course.

Mrs. Trimm's cousin George did not understand this point of view as yet, though he was beginning to suspect that 'Totty and her friends'—as he generally designated society—must act upon some such principle. He was only five-and-twenty years of age, and could hardly be expected to be in the secrets of a life he had hitherto seen as an outsider ; but he differed from Totty and her friends in being exceedingly clever, exceedingly unhappy, and exceedingly full of aspirations, ambitions, fancies, ideas and thoughts ; in being poor instead of rich ; and, lastly, in being the son of a man who had failed in the pursuit of wealth, and who could not prove even the most distant relationship to any one of the gentle-

men who had signed the Declaration of Independence, fought in the Revolution, or helped to frame the Constitution of the United States. George, indeed, possessed these ancestral advantages through his mother, and in a more serviceable form through his relationship to Totty; but she, on her part, felt that the burden of his cleverness might be too heavy for her to bear, should she attempt to launch him upon her world. Her sight was keen enough, and she saw at a glance the fatal difference between George and other people. He had a habit of asking serious questions, and of saying serious things, which would be intolerable at a dinner party. He was already too strong to be put down, he was not yet important enough to be shown off. Totty's husband, who was an eminent lawyer, occasionally asked George to dine with him at his club, and usually said, when he came home, that he could not understand that boy; but, being of an inquiring disposition, Mr. Trimm was impelled to repeat the hospitality at intervals that gradually became more regular. At first he had feared that the dark, earnest face of the young man, and his grave demeanour, concealed the soul of a promising prig, a social article which Sherrington Trimm despised and loathed. He soon discovered, however, that these apprehensions were groundless. From time to time his companion gave utterance to some startling opinion or freezing bit of cynicism which he had evidently been revolving in his thoughts for a long time, and which forced Mr. Trimm's gymnastic intelligence into thinking more seriously than usual. Doubtless George's remarks were often paradoxical and youthfully wild, but his hearer liked them none the less for that. Keen and successful in his own profession, he scented afar the capacity for success in other callings. Accustomed by the habits and pursuits of his own exciting life to judge men and things quickly, he recognised in George another mode of the force to which he himself owed his reputation. To lay down the law and determine the precise manner in which that force should be used was another matter, and one in which Sherrington Trimm did not propose to meddle. More than once, indeed, he asked George what he meant to do in the world, and George answered, with a rather inappropriate look of determination, that he believed himself good for nothing, and that when there was no more bread and butter at home he should doubtless find his own level by going up long ladders with a hod of bricks on his shoulder. Mr. Trimm's jovial face usually expressed his disbelief in such theories by a bland smile as he poured out another glass of wine for his young guest.

He felt sure that George would do something, and George, who got little sympathy in his life, understood his encouraging certainty, and was grateful.

Mrs. Trimm, however, shared her cousin's asserted convictions about himself so far as to believe that, unless something was done for him, he might actually be driven to manual labour for support. She assuredly had no faith in general cleverness as a means of subsistence for young men without fortune, and yet she felt that she ought to do something for George Wood. There was a good reason for this beneficent instinct. Her only brother was chiefly responsible for the ruin that had overtaken John Wood when George was still a boy, and she herself had been one of the winners in the game, or at least had been a sharer with her brother in the winnings. It is true that the facts of the case had never been generally known, and that George's father had been made to suffer unjustly in his reputation after being plundered of his wealth; but Mrs. Trimm was not without a conscience, any more than the majority of her friends. If she loved money and wanted more of it, this was because she wished to be like other people, and not because she was vulgarly avaricious. She was willing to keep what she had, though a part of it should have been George's and was ill gotten. She wished her brother, Thomas Craik, to keep all he possessed until he should die, and then she wished him to leave it to her, Charlotte Sherrington Trimm. But she also desired that George should have compensation for what his father had lost, and the easiest and least expensive way of providing him with money he had not was to help him to a rich marriage. It was not, indeed, fitting that he should marry her only daughter, Mamie, though the girl was nineteen years old and showed a disquieting tendency to like George. Such a marriage would result only in a transfer of wealth without addition or multiplication, which was not the form of magnanimity most agreeable to Cousin Totty's principles. There were other rich girls in the market; one of them might be interested in the tall young man with the dark face and the quiet manner, and might bestow herself upon him, and endow him with all her worldly goods. Totty had now been lucky enough to find two such young ladies together, orphans both, and both of age, having full control of the large and equally divided patrimony they had lately inherited. Better still, they were reported to be highly gifted and fond of clever people, and she herself knew that they were both pretty. She had resolved that George should know

them without delay, and had sent for him as a preliminary step towards bringing about the acquaintance. George met her at once with the plain statement that he would never marry money, as the phrase goes, but she treated his declaration of independence with appropriate levity.

‘Do not be silly, George!’ she exclaimed with a little laugh.

‘I am not,’ George answered, in a tone of conviction.

‘Oh, I know you are clever enough,’ retorted his cousin. ‘But that is quite a different thing. Besides, I was not thinking seriously of your marrying.’

‘I guessed as much, from the fact of your mentioning it,’ observed the young man quietly.

Mrs. Trimm stared at him for a moment, and then laughed again.

‘Am I never thinking seriously of what I am saying?’

‘Tell me about these girls,’ said George, avoiding an answer. ‘If they are rich and unmarried, they must be old and hideous——’

‘They are neither.’

‘Mere children, then——’

‘Yes—they are younger than you.’

‘Poor little things! I see—you want me to play with them, and teach them games and things of that sort. What is the salary? I am open to an engagement in any respectable calling. Or perhaps you would prefer Mrs. Macwhirter, my old nurse. It is true that she is blind of one eye and limps a little, but she would make a reduction in consideration of her infirmities, if money is an object.’

‘Try and be serious; I want you to know them.’

‘Do I look like a man who wastes time in laughing?’ inquired George, whose imperturbable gravity was one of his chief characteristics.

‘No—you have other resources at your command for getting at the same result.’

‘Thanks. You are always flattering. When am I to begin amusing your little friends?’

‘To-day, if you like. We can go to them at once.’

George Wood glanced down almost unconsciously at the clothes he wore, with the habit of a man who is very poor and is not always sure of being presentable at a moment’s notice. His pre-occupation did not escape Cousin Totty, whose keen instinct penetrated his thoughts and found there an additional incentive to the

execution of her beneficent intentions. It was a shame, she thought, that any relation of hers should need to think of such miserable details as the possession of a decent coat and whole shoes. At the present moment, indeed, George was arrayed with all appropriate correctness, but Totty remembered to have caught sight of him sometimes when he was evidently not expecting to meet any acquaintance, and she had noticed on those occasions that his dress was very shabby indeed. It was many years since she had seen his father, and she wondered whether he, too, went about in old clothes, sure of not meeting anybody he knew. The thought was not altogether pleasant, and she put it from her. It was a part of her method of life not to think disagreeable thoughts, and though her plan to bring about a rich marriage for her cousin was but a scheme for quieting her conscience, she determined to believe that she was putting herself to great inconvenience out of spontaneous generosity, for which George would owe her a debt of lifelong gratitude.

George, having satisfied himself that his appearance would pass muster, and realising that Totty must have noticed his self-inspection, immediately asked her opinion.

‘Will I do?’ he asked with an odd shade of shyness, and glancing again at the sleeve of his coat, as though to explain what he meant, well knowing that all explanation was unnecessary.

Totty, who had thoroughly inspected him before proposing that they should go out together, now pretended to look him over with a critical eye.

‘Of course—perfectly,’ she said after three or four seconds. ‘Wait for me a moment, and I will get ready,’ she added, as she rose and left the room.

When George was alone, he leaned back in his comfortable chair and looked at the familiar objects about him with a weary expression which he had not worn while his cousin had been present. He could not tell exactly why he came to see Cousin Totty, and he generally went home after his visits to her with a vague sense of disappointment. In the first place, he always felt that there was a sort of disloyalty in coming at all. He knew the details of his father’s past life, and was aware that old Tom Craik had been the cause of his ruin, and he guessed that Totty had profited by the same catastrophe, since he had always heard that her brother managed her property. He even fancied that Totty was not so harmless as she looked, and that she was very fond of money, though he was astonished at his own boldness in suspect-



ing the facts to be so much at variance with the outward appearance. He was very young, and he feared to trust his own judgment, though he had a conviction that his instincts were right. On the whole he was forced to admit to himself that there were many reasons against his periodical visits to the Trimm, and he was quite ready to allow that it was not Totty's personality or conversation that attracted him to the house. Yet, as he rested in the cushioned chair he had selected and felt the thick carpet under his feet, and breathed that indefinable atmosphere which impregnates every corner of a really luxurious house, he knew that it would be very hard to give up the habit of enjoying all these things at regular intervals. He imagined that his thoughts liquefied and became more mobile under the genial influence, forgetting the grooves and moulds so unpleasantly familiar to them. Hosts of ideas and fancies presented themselves to him, which he recognised as belonging to a self that only came to life from time to time; a self full of delicate sensations and endowed with brilliant powers of expression; a self of which he did not know whether to be ashamed or proud; a self as overflowing with ready appreciation as his other common daily self was inclined to depreciate all that the world admired, and to find fault with everything that was presented to its view. Though conscious of all this, however, George did not care to analyse his own motives too closely. It was disagreeable to his pride to find that he attached so much importance to what he described collectively as furniture and tea. He was disappointed with himself, and he did all in his power not to increase his disappointment. Then an extreme depression came upon him, and showed itself in his face. He felt impelled to escape from the house, to renounce the visit Totty had proposed, to go home, get into his oldest clothes, and work desperately at something, no matter what. But for his cousin's opportune return, he might have yielded to the impulse. She re-entered the room briskly, dressed for walking, and smiling as usual. George's expression changed as he heard the latch move in the door, and Mrs. Sherrington Trimm must have been even keener than she was to guess what had been passing in his mind. She was not, however, in the observant mood, but in the subjective, for she felt that she was now about to appear as her cousin's benefactress, and, having got rid of her qualms of conscience, she experienced a certain elation at her own skill in the management of her soul.

George took his hat and rose with alacrity. There was nothing essentially distasteful to him in the prospect of being presented to

a pair of pretty sisters, who had doubtless been warned of his coming, and his foolish longing for his old clothes and his work disappeared as suddenly as it had come.

The low afternoon sun fell across the avenue from the westward streets in broad golden patches. It was still winter, but promise of spring was already in the air, and a faint mist hung about the vanishing-point of the seemingly endless rows of buildings. The trees were yet far from budding, but the leafless branches no longer looked dead, and the small twigs were growing smooth and glossy with the returning circulation of the sap. There were many people on foot in the avenue, and Totty constantly nodded and smiled to her passing acquaintances, who generally looked with some interest at George as they acknowledged or forestalled his companion's salutation. He knew a few of them by sight, but not one passed with whom he had ever spoken, and he felt somewhat foolishly ashamed of not knowing every one. When he was alone the thought did not occur to him, but his cousin's incessant smiles and nods made him realise vividly the difference between her social position and his own. He wondered whether the gulf would ever be bridged over, and whether at any future time those very correct people who now looked at him with inquiring eyes would be as anxious to know him and be recognised by him as they now seemed desirous of knowing Totty and being saluted by her.

'Do you mean to say that you really remember the names of all these friends of yours?' he asked presently.

'Why not? I have known most of them since I was a baby, and they have known me. You could learn their names fast enough if you would take the trouble.'

'Why should I? They do not want me. I should never be a part of their lives.'

'Why not? You could if you liked, and I am always telling you so. Society never wants anybody who does not want it. It is founded on the principle of giving and receiving in return. If you show that you like people, they will show that they like you.'

'That would depend upon my motives.'

Mrs. Sherrington Trimm laughed, and turned her head so that she could see George's face.

'Motives!' she exclaimed. 'Nobody cares about your motives, provided you have good manners. It is only in business that people talk about motives.'

'Then any adventurer who chose might take his place in society,' objected George.

'Of course he might—and does. It occurs constantly, and nothing unpleasant happens to him, unless he makes love in the wrong direction or borrows money without returning it. Unfortunately those are just the two things most generally done by adventurers, and then they come to grief. A man is taken at his own valuation in society, until he commits a social crime and is found out.'

'You think there would be nothing to prevent my going into society if I chose to try it?'

'Nothing in the world, if you will follow one or two simple rules.'

'And what may they be?' inquired George, becoming interested.

'Let me see—in the first place—dear me! how hard it is to explain such things! I should say that one ought never to ask a question about anybody, unless one knows the answer, and knows that the person to whom one is speaking will be glad to talk about the matter. One may avoid a deal of awkwardness by not asking a man about his wife, for instance, if she has just applied for a divorce. But if his sister is positively engaged to marry an English duke, you should always ask about her. That kind of conversation makes things pleasant.'

'I like that view,' said George. 'Give me some more advice.'

'Never say anything disagreeable about any one you know.'

'That is charitable, at all events.'

'Of course it is; and, now I think of it, charity is really the foundation of good society,' continued Mrs. Trimm very sweetly.

'You mean a charitable silence, I suppose.'

'Not always silence. Saying kind words about people you hate is charitable, too.'

'I should call it lying,' George observed.

Totty was shocked at such bluntness.

'That is far too strong language,' she answered, beginning to look as she did in church.

'Gratuitous mendacity,' suggested her companion. 'Is the word "lie" in the swearing dictionary?'

'Perhaps not—but, after all, George,' continued Mrs. Trimm with sudden fervour, 'there are often very nice things to be said quite truly about people we do not like, and it is certainly chari-

table and magnanimous to say them in spite of our personal feelings. One may just as well leave out the disagreeable things.'

'Satan is a fallen angel. You hate him, of course. If he chanced to be in society you would leave out the detail of the fall and say that Satan is an angel. Is that it?'

'Approximately,' laughed Totty, who was less shocked at the mention of the devil than at hearing tact called lying. 'I think you would succeed in society. By the bye, there is another thing. You must never talk about culture and books and such things, unless some celebrity begins it. That is most important, you know. Of course you would not like to feel that you were talking of things which other people could not understand, would you?'

'What should I talk about, then?'

'Oh—people, of course, and—and horses and things—yachting and fashions and what people generally do.'

'But I know so few people,' objected George, 'and as for horses, I have not ridden since I was a boy, and I never was on board of a yacht, and I do not care a straw for the fashions.'

'Well, really, then I hardly know. Perhaps you had better not talk much until you have learned about things.'

'Perhaps not. Perhaps I had better not try society after all.'

'Oh, that is ridiculous!' exclaimed Mrs. Trimm, who did not want to discourage her pupil. 'Now, George, be a good boy, and do not get such absurd notions into your head. You are going to begin this very day.'

'Am I?' inquired the young man in a tone that promised very little.

'Of course you are. And it will be easy, too, for the Fearing girls are clever——'

'Does that mean that I may talk about something besides horses, fashions, and yachting?'

'How dreadfully literal you are, George! I did not mean precisely those things, only I could think of nothing else just at that moment. I know, yes—you are going to ask if I ever think of anything else. Well, I do sometimes—there, now do be good and behave like a sensible being. Here we are.'

They had reached a large old-fashioned house in Washington Square, which George had often noticed without knowing who lived in it, and which had always attracted him. He liked the quiet neighbourhood, so near the busiest part of the city and yet so completely separated from it, and he often went there alone to sit upon one of the benches under the trees and think of all that

might have been even then happening to him if things had not been precisely what they were. He stood upon the doorstep and rang the bell, wondering at the unexpected turn his day had taken, and wondering what manner of young women these orphan sisters might be, with whom Cousin Totty was so anxious to make him acquainted. His curiosity on this head was soon satisfied. In a few seconds he found himself in a sombrely furnished drawing-room, bowing before two young girls, while Mrs. Trimm introduced him.

‘Mr. Winton Wood—my cousin George, you know. You got my note? Yes—so sweet of you to be at home. This is Miss Constance Fearing, and this is Miss Grace, George. Thanks, no—we have just been having tea. Yes—we walked. The weather is perfectly lovely, and now tell me all about yourself, Conny dear!’

Thereupon Mrs. Sherrington Trimm took Miss Constance Fearing beside her, held her hand affectionately, and engaged in an animated conversation of smiles and questions, leaving George to amuse the younger sister as best he could.

At first sight there appeared to be a strong resemblance between the two girls, which was much increased by their both being dressed in black and in precisely the same manner. They were very nearly of the same age, Constance being barely twenty-two years old and her sister just twenty, though Mrs. Trimm had said that both had reached their majority. Both were tall, graceful girls, well proportioned in every way, easy in their bearing, their heads well set upon their shoulders, altogether well grown and well bred. But there was in reality a marked difference between them. Constance was fairer and more delicate than her younger sister, evidently less self-reliant and probably less strong. Her eyes were blue and quiet, and her hair had golden tinges not to be found in Grace’s dark-brown locks. Her complexion was more transparent, her even eyebrows less strongly marked, her sensitive lips less firm. Of the two she was evidently the more gentle and feminine. Grace’s voice was deep and smooth, whereas Constance spoke in a higher though a softer key. It was easy to see that Constance would be the one more quickly moved by womanly sympathies and passions, and that Grace, on the contrary, would be at once more obstinate and more sure of herself.

George was pleasantly impressed by both from the first, and especially by the odd contrast between them and their surround-

ings. The house was old-fashioned within as well as without. It was clear that the girls' father and mother had been conservatives of the most severe type. The furniture was dark, massive, and imposing; the velvet carpet displayed in deeper shades of claret, upon a claret-coloured ground, that old familiar pattern formed by four curved scrolls which inclose as in a lozenge an imposing nosegay of almost black roses. Full-length portraits of the family adorned the walls, and the fireplace was innocent of high-art tiles, being composed of three slabs of carved white marble, two upright and one horizontal, in the midst of which a black grate supported a coal fire. Moreover, as in all old houses in New York, the front drawing-room communicated with a second at the back of the first by great polished mahogany folding-doors, which, being closed, produce the impression that one-half of the room is a huge press. There were stiff sofas set against the wall, stiff corner bookcases filled with histories expensively bound in dark tree calf, a stiff mahogany table under an even stiffer chandelier of gilded metal; there were two or three heavy easy-chairs, square, dark and polished like everything else, and covered with red velvet of the same colour as the carpet, each having before it a footstool of the old style, curved and made of the same materials as the chairs themselves. A few modern books in their fresh, perishable bindings showed the beginning of a new influence, together with half a dozen magazines and papers, and a work-basket containing a quantity of coloured embroidering silks.

George looked about him as he took his place beside Grace Fearing, and noticed the greater part of the details just described.

'Are you fond of horses, yachting, fashions, and things people generally do, Miss Fearing?' he inquired.

'Not in the least,' answered Grace, fixing her dark eyes upon him with a look of cold surprise.

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### CHAPTER III.

THE stare of astonishment with which Grace Fearing met George's singular method of beginning a conversation rather disconcerted him, although he had half expected it. He had asked the question while still under the impression of Totty's absurd advice, unable any longer to refrain from communicating his feelings to some one.



'You seem surprised,' he said. 'I will explain. I do not care a straw for any of those things myself, but as we walked here my cousin was giving me a lecture about conversation in society.'

'And she advised you to talk to us about horses?' inquired Miss Grace, beginning to smile.

'No. Not to you. She gave me to understand that you were both very clever, but she gave me a list of things about which a man should talk in general society, and I flatter myself that I have remembered the catalogue pretty accurately.'

'Indeed you have!' This time Grace laughed.

'Yes. And now that we have eliminated horses, yachts, and fashions, by mutual consent, shall we talk about less important things?'

'Certainly. Where shall we begin?'

'With whatever you prefer. What do you like best in the world?'

'My sister,' answered Grace promptly.

'That answers the question, "Whom do you like best——?"'

'Very well, Mr. Wood, and whom do you like best?'

'Myself, of course. Everybody does, except people who have sisters like yours.'

'Are you an egotist, then?'

'Not by intention, but by original sin, and by the fault of fate, which has omitted to give me a sister.'

'Have you no near relations?' Grace asked.

'I have my father.'

'And you are not more fond of him than of yourself?'

'Is one not bound to believe one's father, when he speaks on mature reflection, and is a very good man besides?'

'Yes—I suppose so.'

'Very well. My father says that I love myself better than any one else. That is good evidence, for, as you say, he must be right. How do you know that you love your sister more than yourself?'

'I think I would sacrifice more for her than I would for myself.'

'Then you must be subject to a natural indolence which only affection for another can overcome.'

'I am not lazy,' objected Grace.

'Pardon me. What is a sacrifice, in the common meaning of the word? Giving up something one likes. To make a sacrifice for oneself means to give up something one likes for the sake of

one's own advantage—for instance, to give up sleeping too much, in order to work more. Not to do so is to be lazy. Laziness is a vice. Therefore it is a vice not to sacrifice as much as possible to one's own advantage. Virtue is the opposite of vice. Therefore selfishness is a virtue.'

'What dreadful sophistry!'

'You cannot escape the conclusion that one ought to love oneself at least quite as much as any one else, since to be unwilling to take as much trouble for one's own advantage as one takes for that of other people is manifestly an acute form of indolence, and is therefore vicious and a cardinal sin.'

'Selfishness is certainly a deadly virtue,' retorted Grace.

'Can that be called deadly which provides a man with a living?' asked George.

'That is all sophistry—sophistical chaff, and nothing else.'

'The original sophists made a very good living,' objected George. 'Is it not better to get a living as a sophist than to starve?'

'Do you make a living by it, Mr. Wood?'

No. I am not a lawyer, and times have changed since Gorgias.'

'I may as well tell you,' said Grace, 'that Mrs. Trimm has calumniated me. I am not clever, and I do not know who Gorgias was.'

'I beg your pardon for mentioning him. I only wanted to show off my culture. He is of no importance——'

'Yes, he is. Since you have spoken of him, tell me who he was.'

'A sophist, and one of the first of them. He published a book to prove that Helen of Troy was an angel of virtue, he fattened on the proceeds of his talking and writing, till he was a hundred years old, and then he died. The thing will not do now. Several people have lately defended Lucretia Borgia, without fattening to any great extent. That is the reason I would like to be a lawyer. Lawyers defend living clients and are well paid for it. Look at Sherry Trimm, my cousin's husband. Do you know him?'

'Yes.'

'He is fat and well-liking. And Johnny Bond—do you know him too?'

'Of course,' answered Grace, with an almost imperceptible frown. 'He is to be Mr. Trimm's partner soon.'

'Well, when he is forty, he will be as sleek and round as Sherry Trimm himself.'

'Will he?' asked the young girl with some coldness.

'Probably, since he will be rich and happy. Moral and physical rotundity is the natural attribute of all rich and happy persons. It would be a pity if Johnny grew very fat, he is such a handsome fellow.'

'I suppose it could not be helped,' said Grace indifferently. 'What do you mean by moral rotundity, Mr. Wood?'

'Inward and spiritual grace to be always right.'

At this point Totty, who had said all she had to say to Constance, and was now only anxious to say it all over again to Grace, made a movement and nodded to her cousin.

'Come, George,' she said, 'take my place, and I will take yours.'

George rose with considerable reluctance and crossed the room. There was something in Grace Fearing's manner which gave him courage in conversation, and he had felt at his ease with her. Now, however, the ice must be broken afresh with the other sister. Unlike Mrs. Trimm, he did not want to repeat himself, and he was somewhat embarrassed as to how he should begin in a new strain. To his surprise, however, his new companion relieved him of any responsibility in this direction. While listening as much as was necessary to Totty's rambling talk, she had been watching the young man's face from a distance. Her sympathetic nature made her more observant than her sister, and she spent much time in speculating upon other people's thought. George interested her from the first. There was something about him, of which he himself was wholly unconscious, which distinguished him from ordinary men, and which it was hard to define. Few people would have called him handsome, though no one could have said that he was ugly. His head was strongly modelled, with prominent brows, and great hollows in the temples. The nose was straight, but rather too long, as is generally the case with melancholy people; and the thin dark moustache did not conceal the scornful expression of the mouth. The chin would have been the better for a little more weight and prominence, and the whole face might have been more attractive had it been less dark and thin. As for the rest, the man was tall and well built, though somewhat too lean and angular, and he carried himself well, whether in motion or repose. He was evidently melancholic, nervous, and impressionable, as might be seen from his brown and

sinewy hands, of which the smooth and pointed fingers contrasted oddly with the strength of the lower part. But the most minute description of George Wood's physical characteristics would convey no such impression as he produced upon those who first saw him. He was discontented with himself as well as with his surroundings, and his temper was clouded by perpetual disappointment. Sometimes dull and apathetic, there were moments when a vicious energy gleamed in his dark eyes, and when he looked like what fighting men call an ugly customer. Mirth was never natural to him, and when he laughed there was scarcely the semblance of a smile upon his features. Yet he had a keen sense of humour, and a facility for exhibiting the ridiculous side of things to others.

'What do you do, Mr. Wood?' asked Constance Fearing, when he was seated beside her.

'Nothing—and not even that gracefully.'

Constance did not laugh as she looked at him, for there was something at once earnest and bitter in the way he spoke.

'Why do you do nothing?' she asked. 'Everybody works nowadays. You do not look like a professed idler. I suppose you mean you are studying for a profession.'

'Not exactly. I believe my studies are said to be finished. I sometimes write a little.'

'Is that all? Do you never publish anything?'

'Oh, yes; countless things.'

'Really? I am afraid I cannot remember seeing——'

'My name in print? No. There is but one copy of my published works, and that is in my possession. The pages present an irregular appearance and smell of paste. You do not understand? My valuable performances are occasionally printed in one of the daily papers. I cut them out when I am not too lazy, and keep them in a scrap-book.'

'Then you are a journalist?'

'Not from the journalist's point of view. He calls me a paid contributor; and when I am worse paid than usual, I call him by worse names.'

'I do not understand. If you can be what you call a paid contributor, why not be a journalist? What is the difference?'

'The one is a professional, the other is an amateur. I am the other.'

'Why not be a professional, then?'

'Because I do not like the profession.'

‘What would you like to be? Surely you must have some ambition.’

‘None whatever, I assure you.’ There was an odd look in George’s eyes, not altogether in accordance with his answer. ‘I should prefer to live a student’s life, since I must live a life of some kind. I should like to be always my own master—if you would give me my choice, there are plenty of things I should like. But I cannot have them.’

‘Most of us are in that condition,’ said Constance, rather thoughtfully.

‘Are we? Is there anything in the world that you want and cannot have?’

‘Yes. Many things.’

‘No, I mean concrete things,’ George insisted. ‘Of course I know that you have the correct number of moral and intellectual aspirations. You would like to be a heroine, a saint, and the managing partner of a great charity; you would like to be a scholar, historian, a novelist, and you would certainly like to be a great poetess. You would probably like to lead the fashion in some particular way, for I must allow you a little vanity with so much virtue, but on Sundays, in church, you would like to forget that there are such things as fashions. Of course you would. But all that is not what I mean. When I speak of wants, I mean wants connected with real life. Have you not everything you desire, or could you not have everything? If you do not like New York, can you not go and live in Siberia? If you do not like your house, can you not turn it inside out and upside down and trim it with green parakeet’s wings, if you please? If you have wants, they are moral and intellectual.’

‘But all the things you speak of merely depend upon money,’ said Constance a little shyly. ‘They are merely material wants—or rather, according to your description, caprices.’

‘I do not call my desire to lead the unmolested life of a student either a caprice or a material want, but the accomplishment of my wish depends largely upon money and very little upon anything else.’

Constance looked furtively at her companion, who sat beside her with folded hands, apparently contemplating his shoes. He had spoken very quietly, but his tone was that of the most profound contempt, whether for himself, or for the wealth he was weak enough to desire, it was impossible to say. Constance felt that she was in the presence of a nature she did not understand,

though she was to some extent interested and attracted by it. It is very hard for people who possess everything that money can give, and have always possessed it, to comprehend the effect of poverty upon a sensitive person. Constance, indeed, had no exact idea of George Wood's financial position. He might be really poor, for all she knew, or he might be only relatively impecunious. She inclined to the latter theory, partly because he had not the indescribable look which is supposed to belong to a poor man, and partly on account of his readiness to speak of what he wanted. A person of less keen intuitions would probably have been repelled by what might have been taken for vulgar discontent and covetousness. But Constance Fearing's perceptions were more delicate. She felt instinctively that George was not what he represented himself to be, that he was neither weak, selfish, nor idle, and that those who believed him to be so would before long find themselves mistaken. She made no answer to his last words, however, and there was silence for a few moments.

Then George began to speak of her return to New York, and fell into a very commonplace kind of conversation, which he sustained with an effort, and with a certain sensation of awkwardness. Presently Totty, who had finished the second edition of her small talk, rose from her seat and began the long operation of leave-taking, which was performed with all the usual repetitions, effusive phrases, and affectionalities, if such a word may be coined, which are considered appropriate and indispensable. As a canary bird pecks at a cherry, chirps, skips away, hops back, pecks, chirps, and skips again and again many times, so do certain women say good-bye to the dear friends they visit. Meanwhile George stood at hand, holding his hat and ready to go.

'I hope we shall see you again,' said Constance as she gave him her hand.

'May I come?' he asked.

'Of course. We are generally at home about this time.'

At last Totty tore herself away, and the ponderous front door closed behind her and her cousin as they came out into the purple light that flooded Washington Square.

'Well, George, I hope you were properly impressed,' said Mrs. Sherrington Trimm, when they had walked a few steps and were near the corner of the avenue.

'Profoundly.'

'In what way? Come, be confidential.'



'In what way? Why, I think that the father and mother of those girls must have been very rich, very dull, and very respectable. I never saw anything like the solidity of the furniture.'

Totty was never quite sure whether George was in earnest or was laughing at her.

'Did you spend your time in looking at the chairs?' she asked rather petulantly.

'Partly. I could not help seeing them. I believe I talked a little.'

'I hope you were sensible. What did you talk about? I do not think the Fearing girls would thoroughly appreciate the style of wit with which you generally favour me.'

'You need not be cross, Cousin Totty. I believe I was decently agreeable.'

'Oh!' ejaculated Mrs. Trimm.

'You think I flatter myself, do you? I dare say. The opinion of the young ladies would be more valuable than my own. At all events my conscience does not reproach me with having been more dull than usual, and as for the furniture, you will admit that it was very impressive.'

'Well,' sighed Totty, 'I suppose that is your way of looking at things.'

She did not know exactly what she wanted him to say, but she was sure that he had not said it, and that his manner was most unsatisfactory. They walked on in silence.

'I am tired,' she said at last, as they reached the corner of the Brevoort House. 'I will go home in a cab. Good-bye.'

George opened the door of one of the numerous broughams stationed before the hotel and helped his cousin to get in. She nodded rather indifferently to him as she was driven away, and left him somewhat at a loss to account for her sudden ill temper. Under any ordinary circumstances she would assuredly have bid him enter the carriage with her and drive as far as her house, in order to save him a part of the long distance to his own home. The young man stood still for a moment and then turned into Clinton Place, walking rapidly in the direction of the elevated road.

He had spoken quite truly when he had said that the visit he had just made had produced a profound impression on him, and it was in accordance with his character to keep that impression to himself. It was not that he felt himself attracted by either one

of the sisters more than by the other. He had not fallen in love at first sight, nor lost his heart to a vision of beatitude that had only just received a name. But as he walked, he saw constantly before him the two graceful young girls in their simple black dresses, full of the freshness and beauty of early youth and contrasting so strongly with their old-fashioned surroundings. That was all; but the picture stirred in him that restless, disquieting longing for something undefined, for a logical continuation of the two lives he had thus glanced upon, which belongs to persons of unusual imagination, and which, sooner or later, drives them to the writing of books as to the only possible satisfaction of an intimate and essential want.

There are people who, when they hear any unusual story of real life, exclaim, 'What a novel that would make!' They are not the people who write good fiction. Most of them have never tried it, for, if they had, they would know that novels are not made by expanding into a volume or volumes the account of circumstances which have actually occurred. True stories very rarely have a conclusion at all, and the necessity for a conclusion is the first thing felt by the born novelist. He dwells upon the memory of people he has seen, only for the sake of imagining a sequel and end to their lives. Before he has discovered that he must write books to satisfy himself, he does not understand the meaning of the moods to which he is subject. He is in a room full of people, perhaps, and listening to a conversation. Suddenly a word or a passing face arrests his attention. He loses the thread of the talk, and his thoughts fly off at a tangent with intense activity. As before the sight of a drowning man the panorama of a life is unfolded to him in an instant, full of minute details, all distinct and clear. His lips move, repeating fragments of imaginary conversations. His eyes fix themselves, while he sees in his brain sights other than those around him. His heart beats fast, then slowly, in a strange variety of emotions. Then comes the awakening voice of the persecutor. 'A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Tompkins,' or, 'My dear Tompkins, if you do not care to listen to me,' &c. The young man is covered with confusion and apologises for his absence of mind, while still inwardly attempting to fix in his memory the fleeting visions of which he has just enjoyed such a delicious glimpse.

Fortunately for George Wood, there was no one to disturb his meditations as he strode along the quiet street, ascended the iron steps and mechanically paid his fare before passing through the

wicket gate. Nor did the vivid recollection of Constance and Grace Fearing abandon him as the snakelike train came puffing up and stopped before his eyes; still less, when he had taken his seat, and was being carried away up-town in the direction of his home.

He lived with his father in the small house which the latter still owned, and in which, by dint of rigid economy, the two succeeded in leading a decently comfortable existence, so far as their material lives were concerned. A more complete contrast to the residence in Washington Square, where George had just been spending half an hour, could hardly be imagined. The dwelling of the Woods was one of those conventional little buildings which abound in the great American cities, having a front of about sixteen feet, being three stories high, and having two rooms on each floor, one looking upon the street and one upon a small yard at the back. Within, everything was of the simplest description. There was no attempt at anything in the nature of luxury or embellishment. The well-swept carpets were threadbare, the carefully dusted furniture was of the plainest kind, the smooth, tinted walls were innocent of decoration and unadorned with pictures. There were few books to be seen, except in George's own room, which presented a contrast to the rest of the house, inasmuch as there reigned in it that sort of disorder which seemed the most real order in the opinion of its occupant. A huge deal table took up fully a quarter of the available space, and deal shelves full of books both old and new lined the walls, indeed almost everything was of deal from the uncarpeted floor to the chairs. A pile of new volumes in bright bindings stood on a corner of the table, which was littered with printed papers, sheets of manuscript, galley proofs, and cuttings from newspapers. A well-worn penholder lay across a half-written page, and the red cork of a bottle of stylographic ink projected out of the confusion.

George entered this sanctum, and before doing anything else proceeded to divest himself of the clothes he wore, putting on rusty garments that seemed to belong to different epochs. Then he went to the window with something like a sigh of relief. The view was not inspiring, but the familiarity of it doubtless evoked in his mind trains of thought that were pleasant. There was the narrow brick-yard with its Chinese puzzle of crossing and recrossing clothes' lines. Then a brick wall beyond which he could see at a considerable distance the second and third rows of windows of a large house. Above, a row of French roofs and then the winter sky, red with the last rays of the sun. George did not

remain long in contemplation of this prospect ; a glance was apparently enough to restore the disturbed balance of his mind. As he turned away and busied himself with lighting a green glass kerosene lamp, the vision of Constance and Grace Fearing dissolved and gave place to more practical considerations. He sat down and laid hold of the uppermost volume from the pile of new books, instinctively feeling for his paper-cutter with the other hand among the disorderly litter beside him.

After cutting a score of pages, he began to look for the editor's letter. The volumes had been sent him for review, and were accompanied by the usual note, stating with appalling cynicism the number of words he was expected to write as criticism of each production.

'About a hundred words apiece,' wrote the literary editor ; 'and please return the books with the notices on Monday at twelve o'clock, at the latest.'

It was Thursday to-day, and there were six volumes to be read, digested, and written about. George made a short calculation. He must do two each day, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, in order to leave himself Monday morning as a margin in case of accidents. Six books, six hundred words, or rather more than half a column of the paper for which he wrote. That meant five dollars, for the work was well paid, as being supposed to require some judgment and taste on the part of the writer. There was, of course, nothing of much importance in the heap of gaily bound printed matter, nothing to justify a serious article, and nothing which George would care to read twice. Nevertheless, the exigencies of the book trade must be satisfied, and notices must appear, and editors must find persons willing and able to write such notices at prices varying from fifty cents to a dollar apiece. Nor was there any difficulty about this. George knew that the pay was very good as times went, and that there were dozens of starving old maids and hungry boys who would do the work for less, and would perhaps do it as well as he could. Nor was he inclined to quarrel with the conditions which allowed him so short a time for the accomplishment of such a task. He had worked at second-class reviewing for some time, and was long past the period of surprises. On the contrary, he looked upon the batch of publications with considerable satisfaction. The regularity with which such parcels had arrived during the last few months was a proof that he was doing well, and it seemed probable that in the course of the coming year he might be entrusted with more important

work. Once or twice already he had been instructed to write a column, and those were white days in his recollections. He felt that with a permanent engagement to produce a column a week he should be doing very well, but he knew how hard that was to obtain. No one who has not earned his bread by this kind of labour can have any idea of the crowd that hangs upon the outskirts of professional journalism, a crowd not seeking to enter the ranks of the regular newspaper men, but hoping to pick up the crumbs that fall from the table which appears to them so abundantly loaded. To be a professional journalist in America a man must in nine cases out of ten begin as a reporter. He must possess other qualifications besides those of the literary man. He must have a good knowledge of shorthand writing and a knack for the popular style. He must have an iron constitution and untiring nerves. He must be able to sit in a crowded room under the glaring gaslight and write out his impressions at an hour when ordinary people are in bed and asleep. He must possess that brazen assurance which sensitive men of taste rarely have, for he will be called upon to interview all sorts and conditions of men when they least expect it and generally when they least like it. He must have a keen instinct for business in order to outwit and outrun his competitors in the pursuit of news. Ever on the alert, he must not dwell upon the recollections of yesterday lest they twine themselves into the reports of to-day. Altogether, the commencing journalist must be a remarkable being, and most remarkable for a set of qualities which are not only useless to the writer of books, but which, if the latter possessed them, would notably hinder his success. There is no such thing as amateur journalism possible within the precincts of a great newspaper's offices, whereas the outer doors are besieged by amateurs of every known and unknown description.

In the critical and literary departments, the dilettante is the cruel enemy of those who are driven to write for bread, but who lack either the taste, the qualifications, or the opportunities which might give them a seat within, among the reporters' desks! Cruellest of all in the eyes of the poor scribbler is the well-to-do man of leisure and culture who is personally acquainted with the chief editor, and writes occasional criticisms, often the most important, for nothing. Then there is the young woman who has been to college, who lacks nothing, but is ever ready to write for money, which she devotes to charitable purposes, thereby depriving some unfortunate youth of the dollar a day which means food to



him, for whose support the public is not already taxed. But she knows nothing about him, and it amuses her to be connected with the press, and to have the importance of exchanging a word with the editor if she meets him in the society she frequents. The young man goes on the accustomed day for the new books. 'I have nothing for you this week, Mr. Tompkins,' says the manager of the literary department as politely as possible. The books are gone to the Vassar girl or to the rich idler, and poor Tompkins must not hope to earn his daily dollar again till seven or eight days have passed. His only consolation is that the dawdling dilettante can never get all the work, because he or she cannot write fast enough to supply the demand. Without the spur of necessity it is impossible to read and review two volumes a day for any length of time. It is hard to combine justice to an author with the necessity for rushing through his book at a hundred pages an hour. It is indeed important to cut every leaf, lest the aforesaid literary manager should accuse poor little Mr. Tompkins of carelessness and superficiality in his judgment; but it is quite impossible that Tompkins should read every word of the children's story-book, of the volume of second-class sermons, of the collection of fifth-rate poetry, and of the harrowing tale of city life, entitled 'The Bucket of Blood, or the Washerwoman's Revenge,' all of which have come at once and are simultaneously submitted to his authoritative criticism.

George Wood cut through thirty pages of the volume he held in his hand, then went to the end and cut backwards, then returned to the place he had reached the first time, and cut through the middle of the book. It was his invariable system, and he found that it succeeded very well.

'It is not well done,' he said to himself, quoting Johnson, 'but one is surprised to see it done at all. What can you expect for fifty cents?'

*(To be continued.)*



## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

### SOME OLD ANGLING BOOKS.

AS spring is yeumen in, according to popular superstition—for one sees no signs of it—and as no new book of great interest has come out, we offer this month a few remarks on some old angling books. Two early specimens at least are not generally familiar, Leonard Mascall's *Booke of Fishing with Hooke and Line* (1590) and Taverner's *Certaine Experiments concerning Fish and Fruite* (1600). The others mentioned here are all accessible in reprints, as I would fain make Mascall. Walton is too familiar to need long discourse, but the modesty of his aim has occasionally been overlooked by his critics. In his dedicatory epistle to the *Compleat Angler* Walton says that Sir Henry Wotton intended to have composed a book on the art. Sir Henry died, left the discourse unwritten, and Walton thinks that a good treatise on the subject does not exist in English. For his own book he pretends to no scientific accuracy nor extreme skill. 'I have made myself a recreation of a recreation.' 'I write not for money, but to get pleasure, and *this Discourse boasts of no more*; for I hate to promise much and deceive the reader.' Walton, in fact, probably knew that he himself was rather a bottom fisher, and a dead hand at a chub, than an accomplished angler. His famous 'Jury of Flies' is of no practical value, and is borrowed ill from Dame Juliana Berners. In his dialogue, he never exhibits himself as catching a trout with artificial fly; and as to natural history, a man who says that salmon spawn in April and May will say anything. Walton's charming volume survives because it is 'a picture of my own disposition, especially in such days and times as I have laid aside business, and gone a-fishing with honest Nat and R. Roe; but they are gone, and with them most of my pleasant hours, even as a shadow that passeth away and returns not.' As a shadow they

have passed away, or as a flitting sunbeam, those old days of Old England, when Izaak, far from the strife of troubled times, daped beneath the pendulous willow boughs and heard the milkmaid sing Kit Marlowe's ditty. A better angler than Walton, Richard Franck meanwhile was riding to the Northern wars in steel cap and buff jerkin, but the worse fisherman wrote the more excellent book. Another sportsman, and one more practical than the contemplative Izaak, had published a little discourse of the pastime two years before T. Maxey printed the *Compleat Angler* for Rich. Mariott. This was Thomas Barker, 'an ancient Practitioner,' whose *Art of Angling* is of 1651. Barker was, he tells us, a freeman of Salop, and he lived in King Henry the Seventh's Gifts, the next door to the Gate House, in Westminster. He was already old in 1651. 'Age taketh the pleasure from me with many crosses.' He began his advice to anglers with remarks on trout; he recommends a hazel rod and a hair line, and insists on the necessity of 'keeping out of sight.' Yet he is a down-stream fisher, as were most men then. For bait he prefers the brandling worm or minnow, at which the trout comes 'as a Mastive Dog at a Bear.' 'If you can attain to angle with one hair you shall have the more rises,' for gut was not yet known. Barker is far more learned in flies than Walton. He is fond of palmers. He has various ways of dressing the May fly. 'Some do it with a shammie body.' One night, when 'a Lord sent to me at sun going down to provide him a good dish of trout,' Mr. Barker succeeded by dint of lob-worms, 'angling as I doe with the Flie at the top of the water.' Later, as the heavy air cleared, he succeeded with a white palmer, and in early morning had sport with red and black palmers. He used no reel; 'your lines must be no longer than the rod.' He was successful enough to provide trout, dressed in dozens of ways, for his patron, the 'Lord,' and he kindly teaches us how to 'marrionate' a trout, and 'will warrant them good victual.' In 1657 Barker published a second edition, 'greatly enlarged,' which Walton's publisher brought out 'at his shop in St. Dunstan's Churchyard.'

For forty years I

In ambassadors' kitchens learned my cookery,

says, or sings, Barker. Can he have been cook to that angling ambassador and poet Sir Henry Wotton? Among the many writers of commendatory verses for his second edition John Hockenhall celebrates 'valiant, just, honest, true-hearted Shrewsbury Barker' in English hexameters, not often written, I think,

between Gabriel Harvey's age and that of Mr. Matthew Arnold. Hockenhall prefers Barker's book to those of Ward, Lawson, and Markham. He does not name Mascall. Markham we all know, but who was Lawson, and what is the treatise of Ward? John Dennys, author of a pleasant poem, *The Secrets of Angling* (1613), is omitted by Hockenhall. In his second edition Barker 'shows you the way to take a salmon.' A sixteen-foot rod suffices him, with 'a little wire ring at the upper end of the top for the line to run through.' You must also have your 'winder,' fixed by a spring, which a diagram, to me unintelligible, is supposed to illustrate. The fly is to have 'six wings,' or 'four at least;' 'there is judgement in making these flies.' The line is to be at least twenty-six yards in length; one cannot understand how this short line proved sufficient. Modern salmon sometimes, in angling essays, run out a hundred yards of line, so the angler assures you. Barker now drops into poetry.

My strong line was just twenty-six yards long;  
I gave him a turne, though I found him strong;  
I wound up my tackle to guide him to shore;  
The landing-hook helped much, the cookery more.

He adds a little poetry to his remarks on trout flies.

In the month of May none but the May fly,  
'For every month one' is a pitiful lye.

But Walton lent some credit to the fable.

Barker ends by recommending Kirby's hooks, 'sold at Shoe Lane in Harp Alley, in Mill Yard.' I regret to add that he recommends salmon roe as 'the best bait for a trout that I have seen in all my time. If I had known it but twenty years ago I could have gained a hundred pounds only with that bait. I am bound in duty to divulge it to your Honour, and not to carry it to my grave with me.' Would that he had carried salmon roe thither—nay, farther! Barker's book is very rare; a small edition of one hundred copies was printed by Mr. Burn in 1820. Messrs. Darling have published another edition, as limited in the number of copies.

Contemporary with Barker and Walton was Richard Franck, 'philanthropus.' His *Northern Memoirs*, though written in 1658, were not published till 1685. Sir Walter Scott edited this first known book on Scottish angling in 1821. The reprint is common enough; my copy bears the book plate of the famous angler Mr. Thomas Todd Stoddart. Mr. Stoddart did not cut all the pages,

and I do not wonder at it. Franck was an extraordinary character, but the dullest of writers. He seems to have left Cambridge early, at the beginning of the Civil War, in 1641. He carried from his University a great deal of most tedious pedantry, and he added a queer, stupid mysticism of his own devising. He served in the cavalry with Cromwell in Scotland, and there he learned what salmon and sea trout are like. So fascinated was he that, when the Commonwealth grew fractious, he returned to the Scotch rivers and 'the dark lakes that welter them forth.' His *Northern Memoirs* are a kind of dull dialogues, partly occupied with theology, partly with angling. His route took him to Carlisle, thence to Dumfries and the North. Here his companion hooks his first salmon, which leaps, sulks, runs, and being hard held breaks away. He then receives a lesson on 'the secret art of striking, a moderate touch,' and on giving line. The master next raises a fish which comes short, rises again, and is landed. Dumfries was a very dirty town then, and not a moral one. 'Every Sunday some seldom miss to make their appearance on the stool of repentance,' like Robert Burns. Sanquhar, or 'Zanker,' was remarkable for the malignant insects which, according to the traveller, cause Stoney Stratford to be appropriately so named. The traveller went by Kilmarnock, where rain was the only scavenger, to Glasgow. 'There is a college which they call an University.' The linen was clean in Glasgow, and the people were 'decently dressed.' They pass Dumbarton and 'dirty Dumblain,' and many a Highland glen where 'they live like lairds and die like loons, hating to work, and no credit to borrow, so they rob their neighbours.' They fish the Tay, and Franck recommends 'a glittering fly, the body of red twisted silk, intermingled with silver; the wings the dappled feather of a teal.' He then falls foul of our Father Izaak, who 'stuffs his book with morals from Dubravius and others . . . wherewith he stuffs his undigested octavo : so brings himself under the Angler's censure and the common calamity of a plagiarist.' Walton's book was much too successful not to attract the usual charge which lies ready to the hand of literary jealousy. Franck had met Izaak in Stafford, and had attacked him about his absurd theory that the pickerel weed breeds pickerel. The good Izaak fell back on 'Gesner, Dubravius, and Androvandus.' Franck replied with arguments so convincing that 'my Compleat Angler deliberated, drop'd his argument, and leaves Gesner to defend it : so huff'd away.' We may believe that they met no more, 'for,' says Charles Cotton, 'my father

Walton will be seen twice in no man's company he does not like, and likes none but such as he believes to be very honest men.' Now Franck had ridden with Cromwell. Franck adds, what is true, that Walton's remarks on fly-fishing were 'never made practicable by himself, I'm convinced.' Probably Izaak loved neither the politics nor the practice of the Cromwellian salmon fisher. We must all wish, with Sir Walter Scott, that Walton, not Franck, had made the northern tour, and had recorded in the beautiful simplicity of his Arcadian language his observations on the scenery and manners of Scotland. But the road was too long, the rivers too dirty—no lavender there in the linen—and the Gaelic milkmaids were too slatternly for Izaak. We cannot fancy him running down the Awe with a thirty-pound salmon for his guide.

Franck pushed as far north as Strathnaver, and what sport he must have had among the then uneducated Naver salmon! If he would only give us details of his sport we could forgive him his pedantry and his criticism of Izaak; but he is at once verbose and empty. In Strathnaver (where the Sutherland evictions took place) he found 'a rude sort of inhabitants, almost as barbarous as cannibals, who when they kill a beast boil him in his hide, make a caldron of his skin, browis of his bowels, drink of his blood, and bread and meat of his carcase. Some few or none amongst them have hitherto, as yet, understood any better rules or method of eating.' Franck's southern march is even more stupid than his northern journey. No man ever had greater opportunities of catching fish and of writing a good book on angling. But though Franck could certainly fish, and though his taste in salmon flies was creditable to him, he is almost the dullest writer, and infinitely the most tedious teller of long-winded, pointless tales, that ever held a pen. He emigrated to America, and wrote a work called 'Rabbi Moses: a Philosophical Treatise of the Original and Production of Things.' Scott describes it as 'unintelligible,' and probably Scott is the only man who ever tried to read it. However on such subjects as pickerel weed and the barnacle tree Franck is a scientific sceptic compared to Walton. If I have prevented any angler from trying to read the *Northern Memoirs* this brief account of the Cromwellian angler has not been written in vain. It is fair to say that Franck had a generous admiration of the great Montrose. This, with his love of salmon fishing, and skill in the sport, may partly rescue the character of an ineffably prolix and vapid author.

Possibly Walton's success tempted other people to write on



angling, or perhaps the practical English character was not satisfied with his contemplative humour. Whatever the cause, in Walton's lifetime there appeared perhaps the most practical, but assuredly the most superstitious, angling work of the time, 'The Angler's *Vade Mecum*, or a Compendious yet full Discourse of Angling,' by a Lover of Angling. (London: printed for Tho. Bassett, at the 'George,' near St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet Street. 1681.) It is curious that this site is now occupied by the house of Mr. E. B. Marston's *Fishing Gazette*. The Lover of Angling, in his preface, anticipates 'the common objection of the ignorant,' What needs any more writing in this kind? To this he replies that, coming after other writers, he is like a pigmy on the shoulders of a giant—has the advantage of past experience, and above all does not mean to pad out his book 'by telling you what holy and illustrious persons have been practisers of angling.' This is a hit at Walton. In short, the Lover of Angling drives at practice, not without an oblique hit at Walton's discursive charms. The author asks leave to assume 'the liberty of an Anonymous, many dayly taking it for worse ends.'

This writer does not dally over the antiquities of angling and that great spate Deucalion's flood. He starts with remarks on rod-making. Hazel, crab-tree, blackthorn, and yew switches should be cut about December 10, 'that being the only time.' They should be seasoned for fifteen months before they are made up. His cane rod is enormously long—thirteen feet of cane, a top of hazel, and a yard and a half of whalebone, or rather the whalebone and hazel supply a yard and a half between them.

The rod for trout fly-fishing is to be eighteen feet long, made of hazel in several pieces, 'taper and rush-grown like a switch.' A still better plan is to get the arrow-maker to make a rod of deal, with a hazel and whalebone top. The white arrow wood is to be painted of a rich cinnamon colour.' There is no reel; the line is tied to a loop at the end of the top. The line is to be of the best hair, and a yard shorter than the rod. There follow instructions on hooks, plummets, floats, landing-nets, and so forth. Worms, gentles, wasp grubs, and salmon roe, 'a lovely bait,' occupy many pages. Arum berries, cherries, oat cake, and cheese are all baits dear to the Lover of Angling. He has many absurd superstitions about ointment for bait, made of 'man's fat, cat's fat, and mummy finely powdered.' Great Chafra may have been bait to catch chub, if people followed these hideous counsels, and the dust of Queen Taia may have been smeared on brandling worms. The



author, like Walton, believes in gum ivy, and adds this amazing recipe :

Take the Bones or Skull of a Dead Man, at the opening of a Grave, and beat the same into powder, and put of this powder in the Moss wherein you keep your worms ; but others like Grave-earth as well.

These are no deeds for the contemplative man, and Izaak would have read of them with a shudder.

As to playing a fish, have an especial care to keep the rod bent, lest he run to the end of the line, and break either hook or hold. Here, in my copy, some old angler has written on the margin, 'and hale him not to near ye top of the water, least by *flaskering* he break ye line.' Sea trout are particularly addicted to *flaskering* on the surface, and thereby often make their escape.

Times and seasons next occupy the author ; he notes what I have observed in the Test, that 'when people wash their Sheep in summer, at the first time only Fish bite well.' In Scotland I have seen the Shaws burn, which runs into Ettrick, all muddy and covered with dying trout, thanks to the poisonous sheep-dip which the farmer was using. I doubt if our author knew much about the salmon. 'When struck he usually falleth to plunge and leap, but does not ordinarily endeavour to run to the end of the Line, as the Trout will.' He must have changed his habits very much if this was true. The remarks on salmon flies with six wings appear to be borrowed from Walton. As for trout fly-fishing, 'fine and far off and down stream' are the author's maxims. He has a long list of flies—'little red brown,' 'palmer fly,' 'little whirling dun,' 'great blew dun,' 'little black gnat,' 'green drake,' 'black blew dun,' and so forth. His ideas of dressing flies are sufficiently sensible and explicit. This is the less to be marvelled at as the Lover of Angling is, in very truth, what Franck calls Walton, 'a plagiary,' and has stolen his ideas, and even his language sometimes, from Cotton's addition to the *Compleat Angler*, published in 1676. Cotton was, no doubt, a master in his day and in his way, and wholly contemptuous of that grisly recipe by the Lover of Angling borrowed from the *Pharmacopeia* of 'Monsieur Charras, Operator and Apothecary Royal to the present French King, Lewis the 14.'

It is notable that of all these old writers only Izaak and Cotton, in imitation of him, care to waste a word on the poetry of angling. They are very unlike I. D., Esq., with his *Secrets of Angling* (1613), who sings—

Let them that list these pastimes then pursue,  
 And on their pleasing fancies feed their fill,  
 So I the Fields and Meadows greene may view,  
 And by the Rivers fresh may walke at will  
 Among the dayzes and the Violets blew,  
 Red Hyacinth and yellow Daffadill,  
 Purple Narcissus like the Morning rays,  
 Pale Ganderglas and azure Culverkayes.

All these, and many more of his creation  
 That made the heavens, the Angler oft doth see,  
 And takes therein no little delectation,  
 To think how strange and wonderful they be,  
 Framing thereof an inward contemplation,  
 To set his thoughts from other fancies free,  
 And whiles he looks on these with joyfull eye  
 His mind is rapt above the starry skye.

Of this poetic temper, in an earlier day, was Dame Juliana Berners, concerning whom we know so little. Mr. Watkins, in his preface to the edition in facsimile,<sup>1</sup> places the beautiful and learned Prioress of Sopwell at the end of the fourteenth century. Her treatise on angling was printed by Wynkyn the Worde in 1496. Mr. Watkins very strangely says that 'the aristocratic instincts of the authoress' caused her to print it in a large and expensive volume, 'that it should not come to the hands of each idle person.' But if Dame Juliana were the daughter of Sir James Berners, beheaded in 1388, how could she be seeing her own book through the press in 1496? The words referred to are obviously the printer's. The author must have died before printing was known in England. As Mr. Watkins points out, the lady quotes earlier MS. authorities, now unknown. The lady must have been extremely powerful, for she writes of an eighteen-feet rod as 'lyghte and full nymbyll to fisse wyth.' This makes one suspect that Dame Juliana is not really the author of the work on angling. The author's advice is often good, especially when he, or she, insists on keeping our shadow off the water. But where this old author strikes the keynote of all right thinking about the art is in the charming words, 'Atte the leest the angler hath his holsom walk and mery at his ease, a swete ayre of the swete saveure of the meede floures: that makyth him hungry. He hereth the melodious armony of fowles. . . . And if the angler

<sup>1</sup> Stock, London, *s.a.*

take fysshe: surely thenne there is noo man merier than he is in his spyryte.'

'If he take fysshe!' it was a large hypothesis even in the Ages of Faith!

\* \* \*

When I said that no new books of much interest were coming out, Dr. Smiles's 'Life and Letters of Mr. Murray, the Famous Publisher,' had not reached me. That is interesting indeed to men and women of the pen. There is neither space nor time for a thorough notice of it here. But as to the desk in which Scott found the lost MS. of *Waverley*, when he was looking for fly hooks, I still have my doubts. In vol. i. p. 243 a note states that the desk, after Sir Walter's death, was given to Mrs. Daniel Terry, by her to her brother, Mr. James Nasmyth, while by him it was bequeathed, in 1890, to Mr. John Murray, junior. Now that a desk of Scott's has thus reached so appropriate an owner I believe and rejoice to believe. But that it is the *Waverley* desk I doubt. Scott had many escritaires, and much have I written on that which he used when composing *The Pirate*. But, two or three years ago, I had a letter from a lady, the daughter of an old and intimate friend of Scott's, who told me that the *Waverley* desk, with the famous fly hooks, except a few which Mr. Thomas Todd Stoddart got, was in her possession. I have no right to mention her name, but that the fly hooks were still in the drawer seemed good evidence, in addition to this lady's undoubted opportunities of knowing the truth about the matter. The flies, one may add, bore witness to their date, being tied on hair, not on gut.

\* \* \*

Mr. Besant, in a kindly criticism of a little book of essays, asks why I am always tilting at Russian novelists. Well, it is not so much the novelists as the exclusive admirers of the novelists that occasionally 'vex my quiet.' The genius of Tolstoi, Tourguenieff, and Dostvievsky there is no denying. One can only object that they deserve the punishment which Dante assigns to those who deliberately seek sadness. The world is trying enough, but it has its brighter moments. These, perhaps, we should rather seek to prolong by a certain cheerfulness in fiction. Shakspeare wrote *As You Like It*, and *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *Henry IV.*, as well as *Othello*. He was not always

in Hamlet's vein. But the Russians, as a rule, are for ever in the mood of the Prince of Denmark, and their example is contagious. Then their admirers, in some cases, will hear of nothing but the Russians, and the glorious Frenchmen and Finns, and Lithuanians. *Sursum corda!* We should have merry endings and prosperous heroes, now and again. Their gloom begets within me a certain prejudice against the gifted Muscovites. It is not exactly a literary judgment; it is a pardonable antipathy. One wearies of hearing Count Tolstoi called the Just—*justissimus unus*. One feels a reaction in favour of Gyp, when she is not writing her last novel, and out-doing *Le Disciple* on his own grubby and grimy ground. However, that there may be no ill feeling between this vessel and the realm of the Great White Czar, let us print a translation from Lermontoff, sent by a Scot in Russia. Lermontoff, like all great men, including Skobelev, was a Scot, a Learmont, and mayhap a descendant of Thomas the Rhymer.

\* \* \*

*THE COSSACK MOTHER'S LULLABY.*

Sleep, my baby, sleep, my darling,  
 Baiushki Baiò.  
 Calm the moonlight on thy cradle,  
 Baiushki Baiò.  
 I will chant thee ancient ballads,  
 Tales of long ago,  
 While thou sleepest. Close thine eyelids,  
 Baiushki Baiò.

On the rocks the Tèrek rushes,  
 Turbid, wild, and free;  
 On its banks the cruel foeman  
 Whets his knife for thee.  
 But thy father is a warrior—  
 Fear not thou the foe.  
 He will guard thee: sleep, my little one,  
 Baiushki Baiò.

Knowest thou not the time is coming  
 Thou shalt don the sword—  
 Sitting proudly in thy stirrups,  
 Ride, a warlike lord!

Gold-embroidered saddle housings

I myself will sew.

Sleep, my darling, sleep, my own one,

Baiushki Baio.

Thou shalt be a famous hero,

And the Cossack's pride ;

I will come to see thee mounted

Boldly forth to ride.

All night I will spend in weeping

When I see thee go.

Sleep, my baby, sleep, my angel,

Baiushki Baio.

I shall wear myself with waiting,

Watching still for thee,

All day long in prayer that Heaven

Merciful will be.

I will wonder if thou'rt fainting,

Or if thou liest low.

Sleep, while yet no care thou knowest,

Baiushki Baio.

Thou shalt take a holy image

Ere thou leavest me.

When thou prayest to God, my darling,

Set it before thee :

And before the deadly battle

Let thy memory go

Once to me, to me, thy mother,

Baiushki Baio.

\* \* \*

In a delightful article on 'The Charm of Homer' the *Spectator* lately spoke of the courage of his heroes, their gallant bearing in face of death. They are brave, but not always. Homer looks on courage as a very fluctuating quantity. It is not only that Hector runs away, or that Menelaus faints at the sight of his own blood. They almost all show variable daring. Agamemnon is constantly proposing to 'scuttle' and being rebuked by Odysseus.

'Some other inglorious army shouldst thou command, not us !'

When Hector challenges the Achæans they all dislike the encounter, and Menelaus accepts the challenge only from a sense of honour. Then they draw lots. Among Englishmen, or Frenchmen, or Germans, there would have been plenty of volunteers. Even Achilles is not over-confident when he meets Æneas. For a flesh wound every hero ceases to fight, whereas the moderns go on while they can stand and see. Paris, in fact, expresses the Homeric opinion when he admits that he has his fighting days, and his days when he would rather not fight. No night attack is ever attempted; no forlorn hope is ever led. The most resolute fighter is Odysseus, and with him Diomedes and Aias. A general could not depend on his men. A Peninsular regiment, an impi of Zulus, a tribe of 'Fuzzies,' would have raised the siege of Troy and burned the ships in an hour. My belief is that the gods ruined the heroes' nerve by eternally interfering.

A. LANG.

### *The 'Donna.'*

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following contributions. Sums received after April 9 will be acknowledged in the June number. All communications should be addressed to

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Miss Trench acknowledges with many thanks, for the Night Refuge, 19 mufflers, 6 pair socks, E. S. 1l.; also a paper reached her open, and containing nothing, with 'a red wool comforter' written inside.

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